Social Questions of To-day

MUNICIPALITIES AT WORK

FREDERICK DOLMAN

WITH INTRODUCTION
BY
SIR JOHN HUTTON

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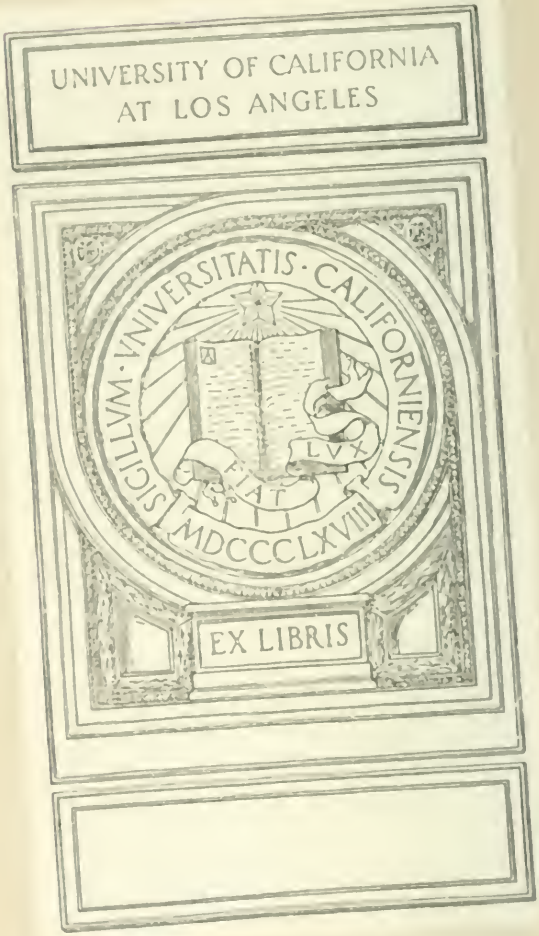
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SOCIAL QUESTIONS OF TO-DAY

EDITED BY H. DE B. GIBBINS, M.A.

MUNICIPALITIES AT WORK

SOCIAL QUESTIONS OF TO-DAY.

Edited by H. de B. GIBBINS, M.A.

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MUNICIPALITIES AT WORK

THE MUNICIPAL POLICY OF SIX GREAT TOWNS AND ITS INFLUENCE ON THEIR SOCIAL WELFARE

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FREDERICK DOLMAN

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

SIR JOHN HUTTON, J.P.

Chairman of the London County Council

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INTRODUCTION

BY

SIR JOHN HUTTON, J.P., L.C.C.

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Mr Frederick Dolman has rendered excellent service by bringing together, in this concise form, the various steps which indicate the growth of that municipal spirit which, happily, is spreading throughout the United Kingdom. Of all those who read this book it is probably the Londoner who will most be stimulated by it, for here he will read that the policy which in London is always being met by the cry of *non possumus*, is, in many provincial towns, an accomplished fact. Cities with populations far less than that of a moiety of London have municipalised their markets, gas, water, tramways, electric light, and art galleries, and, so doing—in addition to reducing the cost to the community—have secured a municipal fund, without an increase in rates.

Birmingham in seventeen years made a profit on its gas

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of £714,000; the markets of Manchester hand over £15,000 annually to the City Treasury; while the markets of Liverpool make a profit of £16,500; the surplus of nearly £7,000 on the trams of Liverpool goes towards the relief of the paving rate; Glasgow in 1893 made a profit of £42,000 on water, £29,500 on gas, and £3,300 on markets; while Bradford made a profit on its electric light of over £2,000.

These are a few only of the many facts which will appeal to the residents in the county of London and confirm them—unless they are shareholders in such undertakings—in their objection to a system which permits of private gain being made out of public necessity. The policy of the Cities mentioned makes manifest their identity and corporate character, and is not without its effect on the citizens.

While the London reformer will be delighted with Mr Dolman's ounces of fact with which to stay the plentiful tons of inconsequent but delaying argument by which he is opposed, he cannot but feel somewhat humiliated that London should in so many important directions tarry far behind the chief centres of provincial life. To the man of faith, the facts here presented will act as a stimulus, because what man has done man can do; to the man who

only feels through his pocket, self-interest calls for a similar policy for London; and to the man who believes in the brotherhood of man, the collectivist policy is the only one which makes for righteousness, because it is based upon justice.

JOHN HUTTON.

February 1895

PREFACE

In the discussion of matters of social welfare reference is frequently made to the municipal policy of such great towns as Birmingham and Manchester, Liverpool and Glasgow, Leeds and Bradford. In the following pages I have endeavoured to show the exact value of such references by a brief and concise statement of these "leading cases" in that municipal policy to which are turned the hopes of social reformers. It will be found that the cases differ materially from each other: a salient feature of the first has but little importance in the second, whilst the third has some distinctive and noteworthy characteristic of its own. The separate treatment accorded them has consequently its advantage in enabling the points of strength or weakness to be accentuated in each case.

In respect to each Municipality, my information has been obtained chiefly by personal inquiry on the spot, supplemented by such as was to be derived from the printed reports, &c., which members and officials courteously placed at my disposal. At the same time, acknowledgment is made of assistance derived from several books

—viz., Bunce's "History of the Birmingham Corporation," Picton's "Memorials of Liverpool," Cudworth's "Historical Notes on the Bradford Corporation," and Nicol's "Statistics of Glasgow."

A part of the book has already appeared in the pages of the *New Review*, the Editor of which I have to thank for consenting to its re-publication.

FREDERICK DOLMAN.

February 1895.

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MUNICIPALITIES AT WORK

I.—BIRMINGHAM.

Early Difficulties of the Corporation — The Chamberlain Era — Municipalisation of the Gas and its Results—Electric Lighting and Private Enterprise—The Story of Birmingham's Water Supply—The Great Improvement Scheme—Its Effect on the Health of the City—Workmen's Cottages built by the Municipality on the old Slum Area—An Acre of Open Space for every 1300 of the population—The Municipal Baths — Municipal Ownership of the Markets—The Improvement in Birmingham's Death-Rate—Municipal Zeal for Art, Science and Literature—The Citizens' Pride in their Libraries, Picture Galleries and Technical Schools—Twenty Years' Good Work at no cost to the Ratepayers—Inequality in the Rates—Admirable Management of the Municipal Finances.

MUNICIPAL reformers look to Birmingham as the eyes of the faithful are turned to Mecca. In making an attempt to depict the municipal life and work of some of the big provincial cities, the Midland capital naturally claims attention first. Precedence does not, indeed, necessarily imply pre-eminence; in some respects Birmingham may possibly be found to have already lost the lead; in some spheres of civic activity the pioneer's laurels may, perhaps, have fallen into other hands. But this cannot change the historic circumstance that Birmingham was the first to initiate, in a broad and comprehensive spirit, the new

régime of municipal socialism on which our hopes of improvement in the condition of large towns are now so greatly dependent ; that there, some twenty-five years ago, municipal statesmanship arose with the brain to conceive and the hand to execute enterprises which were really commensurate with the difficulties and the problems of a rapidly-growing city.

The municipal history of Birmingham prior to what must be called the Chamberlain era is to some extent remarkable. It obtained its charter of incorporation in 1838, in spite of the stubborn opposition of the Conservative party in the town. This opposition was continued even after the grant of the charter. Its validity was contested on various technical grounds, and when the newly-elected Council ordered the levy of a rate, the overseers refused to carry out its behest. For two years the Council was without funds, with the exception of a sum of £2000 raised on the personal guarantee of some of its members, and what could be obtained as loans from the Government. Legal difficulties had been favoured by a want of lucidity in some of the clauses in the Municipal Corporations Act ; and in 1842 Sir Robert Peel, having regard to the position of affairs in Birmingham, Manchester, and Bolton, found it necessary to pass a measure confirming and enforcing the charters which had been called in question. But Birmingham had still to obtain a complete system of local self-government. The charter left untouched the powers given at various times by special Acts of Parliament to several self-appointed bodies—viz., the Commissioners of the Birmingham Street Act, the Commissioners of Deritend and Bordesley, of Duddeston and Nechells, and the Surveyors of Deritend and Edgbaston. The Corpora-

tion had regained control of the police,—a Government police force having been created during the time the validity of the charter was in dispute; but for ten years its general work was crippled and circumscribed by the existence of these conflicting and irresponsible authorities. It was not until 1851 that the rule of the Corporation was extended over the whole area of the town, and that it could fully enter upon its work.

From this time until 1870, when Mr Chamberlain became one of its members, "economy" seems to have been the predominant note in the policy of the Council, and little was done beyond its everyday routine duties. The "new spirit" was beginning to assert itself, however, in the voices of men who only needed leadership to carry their broader views into effect. In Mr Chamberlain the leader was quickly found, and having been elected Mayor in November 1873, he lost no time in beginning the work he had set himself to do by bringing forward a proposal for the municipalisation of the gas supply. Mr Chamberlain's advocacy of this proposal was so effective that the resolution he moved in its favour, in January 1874, was carried in the Council by fifty-four votes to two. Before moving this resolution, Mr Chamberlain had held communication with the directors of the two gas companies concerned, and ascertained the basis on which they would be prepared to negotiate the transfer of their undertakings to the town. Under the terms proposed, and eventually embodied in the Act of Parliament, the Corporation were to pay the sum of £450,000 for the property of the Birmingham Gas Light and Coke Company, and annuities of 10 per cent. to the shareholders of the Birmingham and Stafford Gas Light Company on £320,000 of its capital,

and 7 per cent. on £350,200, making in all an annual charge of £58,200. These annuities represented the maximum dividends which had been paid to the shareholders on the two classes of stock. In the course of a speech, delivered at the Council House in March, explaining these terms, Mr Chamberlain estimated that "the Corporation might rely on making £15,000 to £20,000 the first year, and in a few years it must of necessity make something like £25,000 per annum, even without an increase in the sale of gas." Assuming the normal increase in the consumption of gas, Mr Chamberlain estimated that in fourteen years there would be a gain of £70,000 per annum. This estimate was made on the assumption that no change took place in the price of gas or in the cost of coal. The figures must have brought conviction to the minds of the councillors, for only one voted against the resolution authorising the purchase on the terms stated. There was not the same practical unanimity among the ratepayers. The town's meeting, called to consider the proposal, ratified it by "a large majority," but a poll was demanded, and of 4000 ratepayers who troubled to vote, over 1200 were against the scheme.

Mr Chamberlain's optimism has, of course, been more than justified by results. So well, indeed, have his predictions of the financial success of municipalisation verified themselves, that to-day it would be difficult to find a Birmingham ratepayer opposed to the policy he initiated. In the first year a profit of £34,122 was made; in 1889, just 14 years after the purchase, the surplus amounted to £70,337 on the year's working. In the 17 years that have elapsed since the companies were bought out on such liberal terms, the Gas Committee have made a total

profit for the town of £714,000, or an average profit of £42,000 per annum.

But this is only half the story. In his estimates Mr Chamberlain did not contemplate any reduction in the price of gas. As a matter of fact there have, at various times, been considerable reductions. The average net price charged by the two companies in 1875 was about 3s. 1d. The next year it was reduced to 2s. 10d., in 1879 it was further reduced to 2s. 7d., in 1881 to 2s. 4d., in 1884 to 2s. 2d., and in 1885 to 2s. 1d., while for the years 1887-93 it was 2s. 2d. Since 1885, moreover, there has been a yearly saving on the cost of street lighting amounting in the aggregate to over £80,000; while as regards the whole period, all classes of consumers have enjoyed an improved supply. In 1889, too, an eight hours day was conferred on the workmen employed by the Gas Committee, numbering nearly 1500 in summer and over 2000 in winter, without any reduction in wages, while means have been taken to render less disagreeable what for the most part must necessarily be disagreeable labour. One little instance will illustrate the greater thoughtfulness which has been given by the Committee to the welfare of the men. Owing to the great heat in which they are compelled to work, stokers and others need to frequently quench their thirst. At one time they did this, in the intervals between the twenty minutes' shifts in which they work, at the public-house, which is almost invariably to be found close to the gates of a large gasworks. Some time ago the Committee, after some inquiry into the best kind of beverages for the purpose, decided to provide at their various works an unlimited supply of oatmeal water for the free use of the men, and this has been so

well appreciated that the formerly crowded public-houses have lost the greater part of their custom.

It may be a matter of some surprise, in view of this experience with the gas, that Birmingham's municipality has not adopted a "forward" policy with respect to electric lighting. Instead of keeping the supply of the new light in its own hands, the Corporation has surrendered its legal rights for thirty years to a limited liability company. Twelve years ago the Council adopted a report of the Gas Committee, who have given much consideration to the subject, recommending that, on satisfactory conditions, support be given to the applications of one or more of the companies for power to supply one or more limited areas in the city, and there has been no deviation from this attitude. It is justified on the ground that for a long time to come a supply of electric light for the whole area of Birmingham could not but prove unremunerative, and that, on the other hand, the Corporation would not be justified in carrying on the undertaking for the benefit of only a part of the city. As it is, however, only the occupiers in the central part of the city have the opportunity of using the electric light; and if a profit is made on this partial supply, the profit would, in the hands of the Corporation, have been applied to the relief of the rates throughout the city. Having in view the success which has attended municipal electric lighting in other places, one cannot help thinking that in this matter the Birmingham Corporation has not displayed its characteristic vigour and enterprise.

The striking success which Mr Chamberlain achieved in the municipal arena cannot be better illustrated than by the story of Birmingham's water supply. Its munici-

palisation had long been a favourite project with some of the leading citizens. As long ago as 1851 a clause was inserted in the Local Improvement Act providing that "the Council may provide such a supply of water as may be proper and sufficient for the purposes of the Act and for private use," and further, that on giving twelve months' notice the Council might buy the undertaking of the Waterworks Company. When, in 1854, the Corporation sought to use this power, opposition among the ratepayers so strongly asserted itself that the project was abandoned. The reasons that were given for this opposition read very curiously now in the light of Birmingham's subsequent experience, and in comparison with the criticism which is still made on similar projects of the London County Council.

Thus discouraged, the reformers held their peace till 1869, when Mr Alderman Avery, who is remembered in Birmingham as the father of the Waterworks Committee, moved resolutions having the acquirement of the water supply for their object. These resolutions miscarried, mainly, it would seem, in consequence of personal feelings prevailing in the Council. Yet when Mr Chamberlain brought forward the subject in December 1874, during the second year of his Mayoralty, his resolution was carried without opposition both in the Council and at the town's meeting. The terms of purchase were arranged on much the same basis as in the case of the gas companies, and in accordance with these terms the Corporation is responsible for perpetual annuities to the amount of £54,491, the total price given being equivalent to the sum of £1,350,000. Liberal as these terms were, the bargain has proved to be an exceedingly good one for

Birmingham. In accordance with a principle laid down by Mr Chamberlain, and subsequently ratified by a vote of the Council, no attempt is made to give relief to the rates out of profits on the water supply, it being considered that the cheapness, abundance, and quality of the water are of supreme importance. Considerations of health thus superseding any question of profit, the Waterworks Committee has been content with the formation of a reserve fund of £50,000 and an annual contribution to the rates of the interest on this sum—viz., £2000. Apart from this, the profits have been absorbed or anticipated by reductions in the charges and improvements in the supply. Since 1876, the year of purchase, the water rents throughout the city have been reduced by sums which amount in the aggregate to about £33,000 per annum, and at the same time there has been a capital expenditure of £572,000. In 1876, with a population of about 380,000, Birmingham had a supply from the companies of 3,031 million gallons, or a daily average of 8.30 million gallons; in 1893, with a population of 487,000, the city has a supply of 6111 million gallons, or a daily average of 16.74 gallons. While the supply has doubled, the income from the water rents has increased from £93,527 in 1876, to £144,541 in 1893.

With admirable promptitude and forethought the Municipality has already taken in hand a scheme for such an increase in the supply as will keep pace with constant increase of population.

The scheme is familiar to many Londoners because it secures for Birmingham a Welsh water-shed which some members of the London County Council already had

in view as likely to afford a new source of supply for the metropolis in the near future. The opposition offered by the London County Council to the Birmingham Bill in the session of 1892, natural enough as it was, could not be sustained, even if London had then been in a position to own a water supply of its own, in face of the facts brought forward on behalf of Birmingham. It is estimated that by 1900 the Midland capital will need a daily supply of 21 million gallons, and in 1915 of 30 million gallons, while in fifty years' time 60,000 gallons a day will not be too much. This is the quantity which, it is thought, can be taken from the Elan and the Claerwen; and the masonry conduit is to be made capable of conveying this quantity of water to Birmingham, which is 80 miles distant. As a first instalment, however, only 24 million gallons will be obtained from Wales at an estimated cost of a little over £3,600,000. Even a work of this magnitude and of such benefit to the next generation of Birmingham people will not impose on Birmingham water consumers any burden as great as that borne under the reign of private enterprise. It is estimated by Sir Thomas Martineau, the Chairman of the Water Committee, that all the charges involved by the scheme will be met by the re-imposition for a few years of £24,000 out of the £33,000 per year, remitted in water rents. This is partly because as soon as part of the scheme is completed there will be a saving in the cost of pumping of about £20,000 a year. Still, in view of these figures, it is pretty evident that such a bold and statesmanlike plan of coping with one of the greatest difficulties arising from the rapid growth of cities, could hardly have been conceived or carried out, if the water supply had remained in private hands.

Birmingham's finest example, however, of municipal work is probably to be found in the great "improvement scheme," begun in 1878 and not yet altogether completed, by means of which one of the handsomest streets in the country, the admiration of every visitor to the city, took the place of a wretched "slum area," and a splendid service was rendered to the moral and physical health of a great number of people. It was the third great undertaking entered upon by the Council under the inspiration of Mr Chamberlain's faith in municipal government, and was the direct outcome of the Artisans' Dwellings Act of 1875, in the framing and passing of which Birmingham had taken some considerable share. On Mr Chamberlain's motion a committee of the Council was appointed in July of that year to receive representations as to any insanitary area in the borough, and submit a scheme for its improvement, as was provided in the Act. It was well known that Mr Chamberlain's action was directed against a large area in the centre of Birmingham which, with its crowded population, its miserable dwellings, its defiance of all the conditions of health, had long been regarded by every thoughtful citizen as a disgrace as well as a danger to the city. "It might run a great street," said Mr Chamberlain, explaining in the course of his speech the scheme he had in his own mind, "as broad as a Parisian boulevard, from New Street to Aston Road; it might open up a street such as Birmingham had not got, and was almost stifling for the want of—for all the best streets were too narrow. The Council might demolish the houses on each side of the street, and let or sell the frontage land, and arrange for rebuilding workmen's houses behind, taking the best advantage of the sites, and building them in accordance

with the latest sanitary knowledge and the requirements of the Medical Officer of Health.

The scheme thus indicated was adopted by the Council and approved by the town, the absence of opposition doubtless being mainly due to Mr Chamberlain's eloquent advocacy. He delivered several enthusiastic speeches on the subject. Such was the earnestness with which it was entered upon by the Council, that when a technical difficulty arose with regard to funds for the purchase of property, several of its members and others guaranteed an advance of £50,000 (Mr Chamberlain making himself responsible for £10,000) rather than that any delay should occur. Yet it was no small task which the Municipality had set itself, involving a gross expenditure of nearly a million and a half sterling, the purchase of nearly 4000 houses, and the rehousing of the greater part of a population of 16,500. The total expenditure on the scheme till the end of 1889 was about £1,657,000, of which, however, over £100,000 had been made good by the income derived from the letting of surplus land. In that year the rent of this land amounted to £33,588, while the rents of premises still standing on the uncleared land produced an additional gross income of about £20,000. As the result, the scheme now involves a cost to the ratepayers, in the shape of interest on loans and contributions to sinking fund of about £25,000 per annum. Inasmuch as the loans will be repaid in 30 years, and the building leases for which the land has been let will fall in at the end of 80 years, it is certain that Corporation Street and the adjacent streets will prove a splendid heritage to future generations of Birmingham people.

In the meantime, however, there can hardly be two

opinions about the good value which the city has obtained for the large amount of money it has expended. In the making of Corporation Street it has obtained a fine street improvement; in the reconstruction of the condemned area, it has also obtained a remarkable sanitary reform. During the three years preceding the beginning of the scheme, the average death-rate over this area was as high as 53 per 1000. For the three years subsequent to its partial completion the death-rate was only 21 per 1000. As an outcome of the scheme, moreover, the Municipality has been led to make an interesting and so far most successful experiment in providing dwellings for the artisan class. It was at one time the hope of the Improvement Committee that part of its surplus land would be taken on lease by private persons for the erection thereon of this class of property. But as the result of private enterprise only sixty-two new workmen's dwellings came into existence on the sites of the old slums and rookeries. It was then recommended by the Improvement Committee that the Corporation should expend £5250 on the erection of a block of "model dwellings," as they are known in London. But the "flat" had never yet been introduced into Birmingham; and in view of the strong prejudice which was known to exist on the part of the Birmingham artisan in favour of having "a house to himself," the recommendation was not adopted by the Council. As an alternative, the Council resolved on the erection of twenty-two cottages in the place of a street of insanitary "back-to-back" houses which had come into its possession under the Improvement scheme. These cottages contain five rooms, and all possible provision for the health of their occupants; they

were neatly and attractively built at a cost of £4000, and were all very speedily let to families of the class for whom they were designed, at a weekly rental of 5s. 6d. per week. Seeing that they are quite near the centre of Birmingham, and that they have been liberally provided with open space, it was a matter of some surprise how these cottages could be let by the Corporation at these rents without serious loss on the ground value. It is estimated that after making the necessary deductions in the shape of rates and taxes, the rents yield a net income sufficient, when interest and sinking fund are provided for, to pay an average ground rent of 11d. per square yard per annum for seventy-five years. The market value of the land is believed to be a little more than this; but, on the other hand, something has been gained by making immediate use of it, instead of it being left vacant for several years while its full value was maturing.

It will be some years before Birmingham has an opportunity of municipalising the tram service, the first of the leases granted by the Corporation to the tramway companies not expiring till 1903. The Council has laid down three principles with reference to tramways:—

1. The Corporation must maintain direct and complete control of their streets—hence they must construct and repair the tramways by themselves or by contractors under them.

2. The rates should not contribute towards the support of the tramways or be saddled with any loss.

3. The Corporation should make no profit out of the tramway concessions during the first fourteen years of the leases, but the public should have advantages in cheap travelling and efficient service.

In accordance with these principles, over 33 miles of tramway has been constructed and leased to four companies at rentals which are equivalent to 4 per cent. on the cost of construction during the first fourteen years, and 5 per cent. during the last seven years. The lines having cost in the aggregate £169,656, the rents now amount to £6928. The companies are further required to make annual contributions to a sinking fund, which form a total of £4683, and the actual cost of all repairs as certified by the City Surveyor is repaid by them. In 1892-3 the Municipal Income from tramways exceeded the expenditure by £5743, and when the leases expire, the city will come into possession of its tramway system quite free of cost.

In the supply of fresh air, municipal activity in Birmingham has exerted itself as actively as in that of pure water. It is said that in all parts of the city a few minutes' walk will bring one to a public park or recreation ground. Fourteen in number, they contain an area of 360 acres, or about an acre for every 1300 of the population. Such has been the local jealousy in the matter, that if one ward obtained an open space a demand immediately arose for another space from the adjoining ward, and hence it has come about that no part of the city is without its "lung." This ample provision of fresh air and open space is of course largely owing to civic patriotism as well as expenditure out of the rates. Canon Hill Park and Victoria Park, two of the largest parks, for instance, were the gift of Miss Ryland, the daughter of a Birmingham millionaire, whose fortune was largely made out of Birmingham ground rents; while Aston Park and one or two others were purchased with the aid of public subscriptions. The Corporation itself,

however, has incurred a capital expenditure of no less than £90,000 in providing the people with the means of open-air recreation. One of Birmingham's most recent acquisitions has been two of the Warwickshire hills as a place for excursions and picnics, the distance from the city being about nine miles.

Under the management of the same Committee as the parks are the municipal baths, which, it is scarcely an exaggeration to say, are making the rising generation of the city a race of swimmers. The central establishment was built by the Corporation under the powers given it by the newly-passed Act as long ago as 1851. Two other establishments were added in the 'sixties and another two in 1883, so that at the present time the whole of Birmingham may be said to be well provided with opportunities of practising the virtue which is next to godliness. The total capital expenditure has been about £70,000, and last year the working expenses were about £7000, as against receipts of £5500. At this cost of £1500 per year nearly all the school children of the city have the use of the swimming-baths at a charge of one penny and one halfpenny each; the promotion of swimming clubs has been encouraged by the offer of specially low terms; while the ordinary charges range from only one penny for a cold ablution to one shilling for a Turkish bath. The value of this municipal undertaking to such a city as Birmingham is not to be lightly considered, in view of the fact that last year the number of bathers reached the total of 341,658.

As regards the still more important subject of food supply, Birmingham is in an exceptionally favoured position. It has in all six markets, and each is the property of the Corporation. The purchase of the market rights in 1824

from the lord of the manor was the one great act which distinguished the history of its predecessors, the Birmingham Street Commissioners. The price paid was £12,500; the market rights are now estimated to be worth more than £300,000; and every year, after all expenses have been met, the markets yield a net profit to the Corporation of from £5000 to £6000, the gross revenue being nearly £18,000. Since the Corporation took over the markets in 1851 the sum of about £100,000 has been spent in extending and improving them, the tolls have been reduced, and there has been, of course, an immense increase in the amount of the products sold in them. In recent years the Markets Committee, it should be added, have imposed as rigid a system of inspection and supervision over the sale of food throughout the city generally as it was always able to exercise over that brought to the markets.

How has this spirited municipal policy, in regard to fresh air, pure water, sound food, expressed itself in the health of the city? There is only one definite test, unfortunately—the death-rate. In this respect Birmingham was wont to compare none too well with London and other centres of population, but in the last fifteen years there has been a marked improvement. In 1874 the death-rate was 26.8, which was about the average for the preceding ten years; in 1892 it was 20 per 1000, and in some months since it has been as low as 19.

So much for the part which the Municipality plays in the promotion of the physical health of the city. With free libraries, art schools and picture galleries, museums and technical schools, its work in advancing the citizens' intellectual welfare is scarcely less important. The Free Libraries Act was adopted in Birmingham in 1860, and

a noteworthy feature in its subsequent administration has been an increase, by the vote of the citizens, of the amount of the rate which can be levied, being now 1.41d. in the pound, and yielding a revenue of £11,945. With this revenue and the assistance of voluntary contributions of books, the Council has been able to establish seven libraries, having nearly 190,000 volumes on their shelves, and issuing to readers in the course of 1893 considerably over a million volumes. The splendid Art Gallery, which now forms one of the architectural features of Birmingham, had its inception in 1867 in a small collection of pictures hung in one of the rooms of the central library. Such has been the civic spirit shown by Birmingham's wealthy citizens, that a collection—which includes a number of works by David Cox, one of Birmingham's most renowned sons, and several by such artists as Etty, Sir John Gilbert, Sir Frederick Leighton, H. S. Marks, Henry Moore, Holman Hunt, Millais, Burne Jones, and Madox Browne —has been acquired by the Corporation at comparatively little cost. The net expenditure of about £10,000 per year made by the Committee includes the cost of a central Art School and a number of branch schools, which, in consequence of the low fees charged, are attended by over 3000 pupils, almost entirely of the artisan class. The courses of instruction given in the schools include all subjects having an artistic bearing on the local trades and industries. Further, when the increased liquor duties provided it with funds which could be devoted to this purpose, the Corporation at once made provision for education of a purely technical character. Two years ago it established two technical schools in temporary premises, pending the erection of a suitable building. Over 1500

students are already in attendance at these schools; the cost to the Municipality last year being £7308, of which £6410 was transferred from the Exchequer Contribution account, and £971 from the borough rates. The students' fees came to less than £500. A fine building is now being erected in a central position, which is estimated to cost, with the site, about £60,000, and in this building, when completed in 1895, technical instruction will be given during the day as well as in the evening. This structure is expected to be a noteworthy addition to a group of buildings which, owing their origin to municipal enterprise, have had a marked effect on the architecture of Birmingham. The Art Gallery, the Free Library, and the Council House, forming part of the square which serves as a memorial to the municipal labours of Mr Chamberlain, must be valuable to Birmingham, if only as setting a high standard of architectural excellence.

In London it is rather difficult to realise the pride taken by Birmingham citizens in these municipal institutions—a pride which so frequently finds expression in gifts and bequests made to increase their value and usefulness. There seems a general feeling that in these matters of education, of artistic and technical training, the community is doing, in an organised form, what could otherwise not be done at all, or if done by private individuals, only at a much greater expense and with far less efficiency. Now and again there may, indeed, be a murmur of protest. A short time ago, for example, the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists, an old-established association which, in its time, has doubtless been of excellent service, sent a communication to the Art Committee of the Corporation, complaining of the counter-attraction of the annual loan exhibitions

organised by the Committee to their own exhibitions. The Committee admitted that the Society's exhibitions might well suffer from the competition, seeing that the exhibitions at the Art Gallery were free, whereas for the others a charge was made; but they could only point out that they were fulfilling a duty to the public at large; and, replying to the suggestion of the Society that the municipal exhibition should be held at some other period of the year, explain that most of the best pictures could be obtained on loan only in the autumn. This little incident brought the municipal principle in direct conflict with that of individual action, but remembering the 400,000 visitors who enjoyed the collection of the works of Burne Jones and Watts which the Committee made in 1885, the 260,000 who came to see the pre-Raphaelite collection in 1891, and the quarter of a million who attended the exhibition of old masters in 1888, the Art Committee and the town at large had every reason to courageously vindicate the former.

That municipal action in Birmingham should, during the last twenty years, have been so rapidly and successfully extended, practically without opposition on the part of any section of the citizens, must be largely attributed to admirable financial management. Notwithstanding the great increase in its sphere of usefulness, the rate for which the Council is responsible remains pretty much the same. In 1873 it was 3s. 8.3d. in the pound; in 1893 it was 3s. 8.41d. in the pound. As compared with the time when the Corporation obtained undivided control over the city, and Birmingham first entered upon its full municipal life, the ratepayer is in a still more satisfactory position, the rate in 1853 being 3s. 9d. in the pound. Lest mis-

apprehension should ensue in any reader's mind, let me state at once that these figures do not include the School Board rate nor the Poor rate, as to which the Corporation, of course, has nothing to do. If these are also taken into account, what is the burden of the Birmingham ratepayer as compared with that of the London ratepayer? The School Board rate is as high as in London—viz., 11.95d. in the pound. The Poor rate varies in the seven different parishes and hamlets into which the city is divided, the inequality in the burden of pauperism being hardly less glaring in Birmingham than in London. In the parish of Birmingham it was, in 1893, 1s. 10d. in the pound, whereas in the villa district of Edgbaston it was only 1s., and in the hamlets of Saltley, Washwood, and Little Bromwich, which were added to the city in 1892, when the only extension of the municipal boundaries that had taken place since 1851 was accomplished, the rate is only 10d. in the pound. In the parish of Birmingham, which contains, of course, by far the greater part of the population of the city, the total burden of the ratepayer thus amounts to 6s. 9d. in the pound, whereas in Edgbaston it is 5s. 11d. Moreover, when the extensions of municipal government took place in 1892, the Corporation did not obtain power to levy the same rate over the new additions to its area, and, consequently, in the small districts of Saltley and Washwood, the total rates amount to only 5s. 3d., and in Little Bromwich to 4s. 3d. Whether we take the maximum rate of 6s. 9d. in the parish of Birmingham, or the minimum rate of 4s. 3d. in the hamlet of Little Bromwich, it compares well, I think, with the parishes of London, if the relative services rendered to the ratepayer in return for his money is compared. In the parish of Birmingham

itself the aggregate rate has increased by only 9d. as compared with the year 1852, an increase which is more than accounted for by the School Board's precept.

Birmingham could assuredly not have obtained so well-equipped a municipal life at this cost were it not, *first*, for the savings effected on its municipal ownership of the markets and tramways and the gas and the water; and *second*, its judicious financial arrangement. With the first I have already dealt. As to the second, the Corporation's capital expenditure amounted on March 31st, 1893, to £9,351,000 in round figures, of which nearly a million and three-quarters had been provided for at that date. The average rate of interest payable on Corporation stock, &c., the gas and water annuities being capitalised at 25 years' purchase, is £3.11 per cent.

In Mr Powell Williams, M.P., Mr Chamberlain had a valuable auxiliary in justifying the financial soundness of his schemes, and to him is largely due the satisfactory state of affairs revealed by these figures. For several years Mr Powell Williams devoted himself to the consolidation of the Corporation loans and the reconstruction of its finances, with the object of reducing the annual charge to the ratepayers, and in 1880-81 his purpose was effected and a Bill passed through Parliament.

It will have been seen that Birmingham's Municipality is now responsible for the repayment of loans, &c., amounting to about £7,629,000, as compared with only £615,265 in 1872, and only £263,273 in 1852. The great increase took place, of course, in the decade when Mr Chamberlain's policy was in full swing, that is to say, 1872-82. In that period the amount increased more than ten-fold, whereas from 1882 to 1892 the increase was only half a million.

It was an increase, of course, of almost entirely a remunerative character, as is shown by the enormous rise in the municipal income from £226,258 in 1872 to £1,447,223 in 1893, and in the balance of assets over liabilities from £355,320 to £1,721,988. I have had occasion more than once to refer to the public spirit of Birmingham citizens in the giving of their wealth to the advancement of some civic purpose. Perhaps more eloquent than all such figures in explaining its municipal success is the simple fact that when I was last in Birmingham a retired tradesman had just made a free gift to the Corporation of the business premises he no longer required.

II.—MANCHESTER.

A New Departure in Municipal Government—The Ship Canal and the Manchester Corporation — A Forward Policy in Municipal Affairs — The Water Supply and the Thirlmere Scheme—Swimming Baths in Summer and Gymnasia in Winter—A Municipal Supply of Hydraulic Power—Cellar Dwellings and Insanitary Districts — Tardy Action in dealing with them — Municipal Tenement Houses—The Ship Canal and Sanitation—The Chat Moss and Carrington Moss Experiments—Municipal Gas and Electric Light—The Municipal Technical School—The Pioneer of the Free Library Movement—Distinctive Features of the Manchester Libraries—The Instructive Story of the Art Gallery—A Town Hall which astonishes Londoners — The Deficiency in Open Spaces—Municipal Ownership of Markets and Tramways—The Rise in Manchester Rates—Increased Expenditure and its Causes—An Enormous Extension of the Municipal Area—A Tribute to the Corporation's Good Work.

By its action with regard to the recently-completed Ship Canal, the Manchester Corporation has given its work a new and greatly extended public importance. In becoming part-proprietor of this great undertaking, it not merely carried municipal enterprise a long way further than it had yet been carried; but by saving the scheme which has made Manchester a port, it stored up for itself in the near future a heavy increase in the burden of its responsibilities. If the expectations of the promoters of the canal are but partially realised, there must be a rapid increase in the population, mainly of the labouring class, whose poverty and ignorance make so large a call on the wisdom and activity of municipal government.

There can be but little doubt that the canal would not be *un fait accompli* to-day if the Corporation had not undertaken its completion. At the end of 1890 the Ship Canal Company had practically exhausted nearly the whole of its capital of ten millions and a half sterling, it was found impossible to raise more money in the market, and the undertaking was only about two-thirds completed. In these circumstances the Corporation was appealed to. What was it to do? Here was an undertaking of the greatest public importance to the city as a whole, which private enterprise had failed to bring to a satisfactory conclusion. In it had been invested the savings of the poor as well as the capital of the rich. The collapse of the great project meant serious loss to very many Manchester citizens. On the other hand, the Corporation could borrow millions on the security of the rates at about $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent., and the Ship Canal Company were willing to pay $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. for a mortgage. With the universal approval of the citizens, the Corporation advanced the money, four and a half millions sterling, which completed the canal.

It is, of course, the general belief of Manchester men that the making of the canal will greatly promote the prosperity of their city. This much being granted, it is obvious that in completing the Ship Canal the Corporation has rendered its greatest service to the people of Manchester, and given a most striking example of the value of municipal institutions. The Corporation having embarked on this policy of joint-ownership, some of its members had to give much personal service in carrying it out. When the first loan of three millions sterling was made, five members of the Corpor-

ation were added to the Board of Directors. When the second loan of a million and a half was granted, the Corporation claimed and obtained the right to nominate a majority of the Directors, who were increased in number to twenty-one. Sir J. J. Harwood, a leading member of the Corporation, was appointed Deputy-chairman; and upon him, during the last year or so of the construction of the canal, the burden of control largely fell. It is not too much to say that it is to the experience and ability of her municipal administrators, as well as to the amplitude of her municipal funds, that Manchester owes the accomplishment of her favourite project. There is a big gap between this feat of municipal government and the pettifogging work of the Borough Reeve and Commissioners of Police. Yet, until last year, Manchester had an Alderman who was one of the Police Commissioners, and remembered clearly how nearly all his colleagues, aided by a small section of the citizens, bitterly opposed the incorporation of Manchester, which, for the practical purpose of the election of a Council, they succeeded in delaying till the end of 1838.

In truth, the bold, energetic spirit which overcame the difficulties of the Ship Canal has animated the work of the Manchester Corporation for some years past. It was this spirit which municipalised Lake Thirlmere for the sake of a good water supply, which added the supply of hydraulic power to the things undertaken by the Corporation in the general interests of the citizens, which, after years of delay, caused a beginning to be made in the "clearance" of insanitary areas, which, lastly, supplemented its ownership of gas by that of electric light.

The Corporation has been the owner of the water

supply since 1847, when, at the cost of a little over half a million sterling, it took over the property of a company popularly known as the "Stone Pipe Company." Its supply of 3½ million gallons a day was miserably insufficient for the population, and in the course of a few years it was increased by the Corporation to 24 millions. This quantity would have sufficed for some years still to come, but in taking over the business of the Manchester and Salford Company the Corporation incurred a legal responsibility for the water supply of the townships adjoining, making in all a population of about a million. Having several times increased the supply at considerable expense, the Corporation, about 1876, resolved to take such measures as would secure to this population for a generation to come an ample supply of the purest and best water obtainable; hence the great and, at that time, novel scheme for "tapping" a Cumberland lake 100 miles distant. This scheme was hotly opposed in Parliament on the instigation of Carlyle, Ruskin, Prof. Seeley, and other distinguished people, who feared that the construction of waterworks would spoil the beauty of Wordsworth's country; but it is significant that in Manchester itself there was from first to last hardly any objection raised—in the Council it was sanctioned by forty-two votes to two, and when a poll was demanded only 3,500 burgesses voted against the scheme, while over 43,000 voted in its favour.

With the completion of its works at Thirlmere, the Corporation will have increased the daily supply by 10,000,000 gallons. The supply from Thirlmere can be further increased to 50,000,000 gallons a day by instalments of 10,000,000 gallons, as required, each instalment

costing an additional half a million sterling. When the full capacity of Thirlmere is used, Manchester and its district will have brought to it, from a distance of nearly 100 miles, 50,000,000 gallons of water daily, and this supply would hold good for 150 days if no rain should fall at Thirlmere during that time. It should be added that the Corporation charges ordinary consumers of water a rate of 9d. in the pound, and apart from its value in trade, it is estimated that such consumers save about £100,000 a year in soap and soda, owing to the exceptional softness of the water.

The provision made for the future in the matter of water will probably prove by no means too bountiful in view of the increase in population which the construction of the Ship Canal is likely to bring about. In the meantime, it is easy to understand how well the Manchester Corporation appreciates the importance of its water supply. In this great smoky city frequent ablutions are an absolute necessity if there is to be a sense of comfort, not to say cleanliness ; and there is good reason for the liberal allowance which the Corporation makes for domestic purposes of fifteen gallons per head daily. Cheap and well-appointed municipal baths, in seven different buildings, are fairly accessible to the working classes in all parts of the city. Two of the swimming baths, it is worthy of note, are converted during the winter into gymnasia : swimming is so little in favour during the three coldest months of the year as compared with gymnastic exercise ; and the cost of the conversion is so small, that the plan is likely to be adopted at all the other establishments. Manchester was late in adopting the Public Baths and Washhouses Act—it was 1877 before the Act came into force—but the

Corporation has shown great energy in making good this omission in its municipal life.

In another enterprise to which its splendid water supply is of great value, Manchester has set an example to other manufacturing cities. In the Manchester warehouses and factories hydraulic power has, of course, long been extensively used, but on a system which was wasteful in the extreme, each consumer having to provide for himself the power he required. At length, a company proposed to undertake a general supply. But it appeared to many members of the Waterworks Committee that this was a matter which should be as much in the hands of the Municipality as the supply of water itself. To distribute hydraulic power from a common centre involved breaking open the roads, and eventually a reduction in the quantity of water supplied by the Corporation for generating steam power and for working hoists and lifts. So, three years ago, Parliamentary powers were obtained, and this year the construction of the hydraulic power station was finished. It contains three elevated tanks, each holding a quarter of a million gallons, and the Corporation is now prepared to supply power of from 4000 gallons to 300,000 gallons per quarter. The annual charge varies from £8 to £42, 10s., and the undertaking promises to be as remunerative to the ratepayers as it is beneficial to the consumers of water power.

It must be confessed that in improving the dwellings of its poor the Manchester Corporation has been rather tardy in recognising the possibilities of municipal action. In 1844, a terrible account was given of Manchester in this respect by witnesses appearing before the Select Committee of the House of Commons, which was then

enquiring into the health of popular towns. It was stated that 15,000 of the population—which then represented 12 per cent. of the working class—were living in cellars. Street improvements, the construction of railway stations, etc., has cleared away a considerable part of the property this statement referred to; but, on the other hand, the provision made for the people thus unhoused has been quite inadequate. In consequence, the property which remained has been more and more over-crowded, and for many years the Corporation never appeared to realise that it should and could make good the failure of private enterprise. At length, the continued high death-rate of the city forced its attention to the question. The reports made by the Officer of Health in 1881-84 conclusively showed that the high death-rate was due, not to the unhealthiness of Manchester as a whole, but to "those districts where the streets were narrowest and leading to courts and alleys through covered passages to old and dilapidated back-to-back houses, with low ceilings, damp floors and walls, rotten spouts and windows." In Ancoats, where most of the old, insanitary property is situated, according to another medical authority, the death-rate ran up from 26 per thousand to an average of 50 per thousand, in some courts in this district exceeding 80 per thousand. These revelations aroused civic opinion, and, early in 1885, the Council appointed its Unhealthy Dwellings Committee.

This Committee first tried the voluntary principle by inserting advertisements in the Manchester newspapers inviting offers of old and dilapidated houses at reasonable prices. Ten blocks of houses were purchased and demolished, but they joined other blocks, the owners of

which would not treat with the Corporation, or demanded extravagant prices. Beyond giving an overcrowded district a little open space, nothing was accordingly done. Two areas in Ancoats were then condemned, and the Committee prepared improvement schemes, which, being sanctioned by the Local Government Board, were carried out with the aid of compulsory purchase. On these areas the Corporation has just erected two blocks of tenement dwellings, one costing about £18,000, and the other nearly £50,000. The buildings are only three storeys high, and they both have large open spaces in the centre. In one case, it may be added, the land cost £9810, or £2, 2s. 6d. per square yard; in the other, over £95,000, or £4, 19s. per square yard. Nevertheless, by charging rents from 3s. to 5s. 6d. per week for each tenement of two, three, and four rooms, the Corporation expects to make good its outlay. Whether it is successful in doing this or not, the municipality, out of regard for the health of its citizens, has no alternative but to vigorously continue the policy thus tardily begun.

The construction of the Ship Canal has greatly added to a work of the Manchester Corporation which was already sufficiently arduous—that is, the disposal of the sewage. It was obvious that precautions would have to be taken by Local Authorities between Manchester and Liverpool to keep the canal reasonably free from pollution. Manchester first looked to its own duty in the matter three or four years ago by pushing forward and extending a previously projected scheme for the disposal of the street sewage, the chief object of which was to intercept at various points the existing pipes and conduits so as to carry away the sewage to outfall works and pass it through

deodorising processes before it entered the river. A figure or two will indicate the size of the work. The Corporation has 21 miles of sewage mains, through which there passes on the average fifteen and a half millions of gallons a day. The intercepting pipes measure 14 ft. by 10 ft. 6 in., and for their construction, together with the other necessary work, the sum of half a million was borrowed.

A word or two must be said about the Sanitary Committee's farms, which, if successful, will give to the Manchester Corporation the credit of solving the problem of turning to profitable purpose the refuse of a great city. Carrington Moss, where the first experiment was begun, is about six miles from Manchester, and contains 1100 acres. It was purchased for £38,000, and about the same amount has been spent in reclaiming and developing the estate. It originally contained 600 acres of virgin moss, and all this has been drained and cultivated and placed under crop. In the course of one year 50,000 tons of refuse have been sent from Manchester, being conveyed to the estate by the Ship Canal and thence by light railway. Chat Moss, which has been only recently purchased, is much larger, containing 2500 acres. Four hundred acres of this, however, is ordinary agricultural land, and with the exception of 200 acres of virgin moss the remainder has been cultivated. The purchase price was £132,500, and it is expected that a further sum of £30,000 will be spent on wharves, road-making, railways, and other permanent works. Chat Moss, which is eight miles from the city, is bounded for over a mile by the Ship Canal, and a short railway has also been specially constructed to facilitate the conveyance of sewage. It is anticipated that for the next five years 70,000 tons can be sent annually to Chat Moss,

and that after that 48,000 tons can be disposed of there every year.

Very satisfactory has been the success of the Corporation in introducing the electric light into the city. Various electric light companies had their eyes on Manchester as being likely to afford them profitable business; but all their applications for "provisional orders" under the Act were rejected by the Corporation. This, coupled with the fact that the Corporation itself took no active steps in the matter, led to some criticism of the system of municipal ownership in such a necessary of life as artificial light. It was alleged that the Corporation did not promptly establish a supply of the electric light from the fear that its profit on the gas—which amounts to about £60,000 a year—would thereby be endangered. It is now clear, however, that the delay arose simply from the desire of the Corporation to have the "installation" carried out on the best possible principles, so that it would stand the test of time, and not have to be superseded at a wasteful expense. With this desire, a Committee patiently carried out an exhaustive inquiry into the different systems of electric lighting and their adaptability to the needs of Manchester, and as a result of this exercise of patience it is believed that the light provided by the Corporation has a degree of excellence and trustworthiness not to be found elsewhere outside London.

The installation, which is on what is known as "the five-wire system," has been carried out by means of a loan of £150,000. A fine building has been erected in the heart of the city, and a plant laid down capable of supplying the current for 40,000 lamps of eight candle power. When the scheme was initiated it was supposed that this

plant would suffice for the need of consumers for two years; but, although the machinery has been working only since July 1893, the whole power has been brought into use, in the small central district in which, to begin with, the Corporation has laid the mains. There is room in the building, however, for a considerable addition to the plant, and in course of time district stations will be built in all parts of the city. The light is supplied at two scales of charges—one for small consumers, and another, substantially lower, for large consumers. As this scale works out, roughly speaking, a consumer of electric light for about 1000 hours in the year would find the cost about the same as gas at the present Manchester charge of 2s. 6d. per 1000 feet; a smaller consumer would find the cost greater, a larger consumer would find it less than gas. With the scale of charges it has adopted, the Corporation has already found its undertaking a remunerative one.

For 1893 the cost of the works was £5509, and the revenue from the sale of the current and rental of meters was £10,198. After payment of interest on loans and bank charges there was a profit of £1167. The sum of £1376 was carried, however, to the fund for the extinction of the debt, leaving a debit balance of £209. On the whole capital expenditure since the beginning of the undertaking there was a credit balance of £455.

Manchester was the pioneer as regards the collective ownership of gas. The old Commissioners of Police obtained powers to light the town by the new illuminant in 1824. The works they then erected were transferred to the Corporation in 1843, when the Police Commissioners came to an end. It is not known what amount of the ratepayers' money had then been invested in the manufacture

of gas, but in 1857 the valuation showed that the assets were nearly £400,000 and the liabilities a little short of £340,000. Between that date and March 1893, a capital expenditure of £1,942,865 was incurred, and the Corporation has since acquired power to borrow half a million for the purpose of increasing the manufacture and the storage of gas. The excess of assets over liabilities now amounts to about £900,000, and, as already stated, the yearly profit averages about £60,000. The Corporation supplies over 80,000 consumers, and in 1892-3 manufactured 3636 million cubic feet of gas as compared with 1070 million in 1865. It is the universal opinion in Manchester that the collective ownership of the gas supply has been a brilliant success.

No municipality has taken advantage with more alacrity of the legislation of the last few years for the advancement of technical education. Six months after the passing of the Technical Instruction Act of 1889 a Committee was at work considering how best its provisions could be applied to Manchester. Under its supervision grants to the amount of £25,000 have been made to a number of educational institutions in the city, and scholarships founded to the value of £3180 per annum. Not content with the mere voting of money, however, the Corporation has taken steps which are likely to secure for Manchester the finest municipal technical school in the country. The scheme has grown out of the old Whitworth Institute, which, three years ago, was handed over to the Corporation by the legatees of the late Sir Joseph Whitworth. They took this step in the belief that the purpose of the Institute would be best served if it were placed under municipal management as part of the Corporation's scheme for technical

instruction. As far as can at present be judged, this belief was well founded. Last year the Corporation was directly providing instruction in these buildings to 3731 students of science and 480 students of art.* It was part of the agreement between the Corporation and the governors of the Whitworth Institute that as soon as necessary additional accommodation should be provided for students, and with the legatees of the late Sir Joseph Whitworth the latter engaged to give towards a building fund a sum of about £30,000. Before laying their plans for a new school the Technical Education Committee, however, appointed from their number a deputation to visit these municipal institutions in some of the principal towns on the Continent. After receiving the report of this deputation, the Corporation resolved that the new school should be of the best. Accordingly, the new building which is now being erected on a site in Sackville Street, given by the Whitworth legatees, is to cost £100,000, and when completed will assuredly be a worthy memorial both of Sir Joseph Whitworth and of the municipal enterprise which distinguishes the Cotton City in the closing years of the nineteenth century.

In the educational sphere generally, Manchester has good reason to be proud of its municipal work. It was the first town in the United Kingdom to bring into opera-

* "The Technical School requires that all its day students must possess, on entrance, a sound general education, and it must therefore look for its supply of suitably prepared students to the grammar schools and other secondary schools, and to the higher grade elementary schools. The school also provides evening lectures and laboratory and workshop practice for apprentices, journeymen, and foremen in the scientific principles underlying their respective trades and industries."—*Report of the Technical Instruction Committee.*

tion Mr Ewart's Public Libraries Act of 1850, and it now has thirteen institutions carried on in accordance with the principle of the Act. In order that the eager desire of the people for more books might be satisfied, and that all parts of the city might be equally well served, the Corporation, indeed, obtained Parliamentary power to increase the library from a penny to not more than twopence in the pound. With the increased resources thus provided, the Corporation built three more libraries, and others are in course of erection in the outlying districts of Openshaw and Gorton. The libraries have one or two distinctive features. Instead of excluding boys altogether from the libraries, the Committee resolved some years ago to provide them with rooms specially for their use. In 1878, it was decided to open the libraries on Sunday, and they have remained open on that day ever since. The Committee now have in their charge some 230,000 volumes, and the issue of these volumes in the course of the year comes to about a million and three-quarters. On the average, 5000 volumes are in use every day as compared with 460 in 1852—the first year of the work of the Libraries Committee. These figures, of course, refer only to the reading of books; if the statistics of the newspaper and magazine rooms are also taken into account, the daily average of visitors to these municipal buildings is raised to nearly 14,000.

Manchester's municipal Art Gallery is little more than ten years old. But for some sixty years past the city has had its Royal Institution, "for the encouragement of fine arts." First projected at a public meeting in 1823, and built by a public subscription, which amounted to £30,000, there is not a little significance in the fact that, in 1880, the

Governors should have offered on their own initiative to transfer it to the Corporation without any pecuniary consideration. The offer, with its one condition, that for twenty years an annual sum of £2000 should be devoted by the Corporation to the purchase of works of art, was cordially accepted ; and in 1882, according to the terms of an Act of Parliament, the institution passed into the hands of the Municipality. Its art treasures have since been much augmented, not merely by the annual expenditure out of the rates, but also by the gifts of citizens whose civic spirit was aroused when the Galleries became the property of the city. Manchester's Art Gallery cannot be advantageously compared with those of Liverpool and Birmingham. But, already, the Art Gallery Committee have had to contrive to increase the amount of space for the pictures, etc., to the detriment of the Gallery's design, and before very long it may be confidently expected that the Corporation will undertake the erection of another building, where the increasing number of its art treasures can be more worthily and fittingly housed. In that event, the present building would probably be devoted to the annual exhibitions, which every year increase in importance and popularity. And in considering the encouragement which has been given by the Municipality to art in Manchester, the mural decoration of its splendid Town Hall must not be forgotten. Mr Ford Madox Browne's fine series of frescoes serve the double purpose of stimulating the citizens' sense of beauty whilst instructing them in the history of their city—the twelve panels, with one or two exceptions, illustrating the chief episodes in the annals of Manchester. The Town Hall itself must astonish many a Londoner, unaccustomed as yet to the idea of a great

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municipal organisation, when he beholds it for the first time from the centre of Albert Square. The building cost over a million of money, took ten years (1868-77) to erect, and contains 314 rooms, wherein the daily work is done of the many departments of Manchester's municipal actions.

In providing for the out-door recreation of the people Manchester is still rather behindhand. Until 1870 the Corporation had not spent a shilling in the purchase of an open space, although it was maintaining two small parks which had been acquired and laid out by a committee acting on behalf of a large number of private subscribers. The municipal parks and open spaces do not now represent more than 215 acres, Alexandria Park being the largest with 60 acres. Taking the population of the municipal area at half a million, this is less than half an acre for each thousand persons. It must be remembered, however, that the population of the municipal area has been increased by at least 150,000 as the result of the recent extensions of of the City boundaries. The first extension took place in 1885, and it is since that date that 88 of the 215 acres have been acquired by the Corporation. That the Corporation is no longer indifferent to the importance of its duty in this respect, may be argued from its energetic attempt to obtain possession at a reasonable price of Boggart Hill Clough, a spot on Blackley Glen, measuring some 150 acres, which is well known to Manchester men.

How much Manchester is in advance of London may be illustrated by its municipal ownership of the markets, in which its citizens can obtain their food; the tramways, in which they can ride between their work and their homes; and the cemeteries in which their bones are laid to rest.

The markets cover an area of nearly 40,000 square yards, including well-appointed abattoirs. In the Central Market, fish, fruit, and vegetables are sold, and the busy scene under the broad and lofty glass roof on a Saturday afternoon is one not to be easily forgotten. In twenty-seven years the Corporation received in market tolls and rents more than half a million sterling, and at the present time about £15,000 a year is handed over by the Markets Committee to the City Treasury. As a consequence of the usefulness and popularity of the markets, Manchester streets are almost free from costermongers' barrows and noises.

All the tramways in Manchester are owned by the Corporation, several having been transferred to it by local boards at the time they were amalgamated with the city. The Corporation has received in rents and interest from the tramway companies about £275,000, and out of this amount it has been able to transfer nearly £60,000 in relief of rates. Of loans to the amount of about £160,000 contracted in respect to tramways, there has been repayment of nearly £35,000, and a sinking fund of over £42,000 has been accumulated. These results have been achieved after a liberal expenditure in order to keep the lines in good repair, and after ample allowances have been made for their depreciation.

That the administration of municipal affairs has been on the whole economical and remunerative, can be at once seen by reference to the rates of Manchester. In the year 1892, the expenditure on municipal and Poor Law purposes amounted to £565,505, which represented an average rate over the whole city of 4s. $5\frac{1}{10}$d. The significance of this figure will be gauged if it is compared with

the amount of the rate levied in most of the London parishes, even if we do not take into account the greater services rendered by the municipality to the ratepayers. It is to be noted, however, that in the last few years the Manchester rates have undergone considerable increase. Ten years ago they averaged only about 3s. in the pound, in 1888 only 3s. 5d., and in 1891 only 4s. The expenditure in this period has risen from about £330,000 per annum. My readers will understand from previous pages the causes of this increase.

The debt of the Corporation has now reached the very large total of £13,880,000. Nearly a third of this amount has of course been incurred for the purpose of advancing again to the Manchester Ship Canal Company, and on the interest account there is now a balance in favour of the Corporation of nearly £80,000. On the aggregate balance-sheet of the Corporation at the end of the last financial year the assets were shown to amount to about seventeen millions and a half sterling, and the liabilities to fourteen millions and a half sterling, leaving a surplus of £2,960,885. It is to be observed that about £2,300,000 of this sum is made up of the balances on three remunerative undertakings of the Corporation—viz., the waterworks, the gasworks, and the markets. On the first there is a balance on the capital account of about £995,000, on the second of £878,000, and on the third of £423,000.

I have spoken of the average rate; as a matter of fact, there are still seven different rates levied over the municipal area, varying in 1892 from 5s. 10d. in the parish of Beswick to 4s. in the township of Openshaw. In the parish of Manchester, which contains a population of about

150,000, the rate was 5s. in the pound, which is lower than that levied in five-sixths of the London parishes. Manchester has secured, as I have already indicated, such extensions of the municipal boundaries as make them fairly co-terminous with the benefits of its municipal government. But to some of the townships incorporated in 1885 and 1890, exemption was given from the School Board rate till such time as they should require Board Schools to be built. As regards three of the townships incorporated in 1890, it was found necessary, in order to obtain their consent, to grant differential rating for ten years. As the result of these extensions, the rateable value of Manchester has been increased from about £670,000 to nearly £2,900,000, the acreage from 4293 to 12,911, and the population from 220,000, to over half a million. Although a good deal of opposition, on the part of the local boards and their constituents, had to be overcome, the amalgamation has given complete satisfaction to the people whose civic welfare the Corporation has taken into its keeping. "We desire to gratefully acknowledge," said the ratepayers of one of these districts on the occasion of the opening of a new park, "the beneficial work of the Council in our district since the amalgamation, in regard to the great improvement in our streets, the better lighting of the district, the greater efficiency in the police supervision, and in particular the providing of a public Free Library."

III.—LIVERPOOL.

Antiquity of its Municipal Government—Some Reason to be grateful to its Old Corporation—Liverpool's Heritage from Past Neglect—What the Municipality is doing to recover Arrears—Expenditure of Half a million on Public Parks—The First Municipal Baths and Wash-houses—Sea-water Swimming Baths—Liverpool's Markets—The Beginning of a Sanitary Crusade—A Municipal Water Supply its First Result—Tapping a Welsh Lake—Private Ownership of the Gas Supply and its Cost—The Corporation and the Slums—Its Difficulties in destroying them—Municipal "Models"—Are they Popular?—A Case of too little Faith in Municipal Action—A Declining Death-Rate and its Significant Disparities—The "New Spirit" in Municipal Work for Education—A Splendid Group of Municipal Buildings—Board Schools as Reading-Rooms—Making the Library and Museum more attractive—Municipal Lectures—The Walker Art Gallery and its History—Liverpool's use of the "Liquor Money"—The Nautical College the latest Municipal Institution—Smallness of the Corporation's Debt—The Rates satisfactory, except in their Variation—Extension of the Municipal Boundaries—Its Importance to Liverpool's Municipal Future.

LIVERPOOL can be compared with the City of London in the antiquity of its municipal government. Its original charter of incorporation was granted by King John, and bears date August 28, 1207. On festive occasions the Lord Mayor can decorate his table with corporate plate of medieval manufacture, and part of his regalia was worn by predecessors early in the seventeenth century. When the Commissioners, whose work led to the passing of the Municipal Corporations Act, visited Liverpool in

1834, they found it—unlike Birmingham and several other large towns—in the full possession of municipal powers. It had a mayor and two bailiffs, elected by the freemen, and forty-one councillors. The councillors were not chosen by popular election, but each vacancy was filled up by the remaining members of the Council. Freedom of the town was obtained by birth, by servitude, or by gift of the Council, and was so little diffused, even among the higher class, that, according to evidence given in the inquiry by the Commissioners, only seven out of two hundred medical men then practising at Liverpool had civic rights.

It may well be supposed that, in view of this, the Liverpool of to-day gains little from the antiquity of its municipal government. In one important respect, however, the city has cause to be grateful to its Mayor and Corporation of the Middle Ages; to their wise policy Liverpool owes its valuable corporate estate, by means of which practically all its fine public buildings have been erected free of expense to the ratepayers. About the middle of the seventeenth century the Corporation purchased the feudal rights of Sir William Molyneux, and commuted, for a lump sum, the ground rents payable to the Duchy of Lancaster..

In other ways, too, towards the end of its reign the Corporation did something to anticipate the beneficent activity of modern municipalities. In 1820 it built St John's Market for the accommodation of retail dealers, whose stalls and booths had become a serious obstruction to the growing traffic of the town; in 1828 it constructed the St George's Baths on the banks of the Mersey. The possibilities of municipal action thus suggested were

probably not lost on the town. At the first election of the reformed Corporation 59 of the 64 members were Liberals, or, as they would now be called, Progressives. The impulse soon exhausted itself, however. In 1841 the traditional Toryism of Liverpool asserted itself, and in only three of the sixteen wards were its opponents successful.*

Nor was the full effect of the reform—the enlargement of the municipal franchise as well as of the municipal area—felt in the better government of the city for some years later. Between 1700 and 1800 the population grew from about 6000 to nearly 80,000; in 1831 it was 165,000, and in twenty years it doubled itself. In both periods the enormous increase went on with that reckless disregard for the value of light and air and space which has made Liverpool, with ninety-nine people to the acre, the most densely populated city in the kingdom. Until 1856 the Corporation had made no public park, and as late as 1857 its citizens were supplied by a private company with water only twice or thrice a week. In covering the land with bricks and mortar the builders were allowed to destroy every vestige of vegetation—every leaf of a tree and every blade of grass—with the result that the dingy monotony of the older parts of Liverpool has but very few parallels in the Metropolis itself. In this period, moreover, some 15,000 dwellings came into existence which, owing to the way they were built, could never have been fit for human habitation.

What has been done and what is being done on the part of the Corporation to make good these heavy arrears

* By this I must not be understood to imply that at the present time —or for many years past—Conservatism in Liverpool has been identical with antagonism to all municipal progress.

of past neglect? The answer can be but a qualified one: in some respects much, in others little. Let us first look at the brighter side of the picture. On a visit to Liverpool nothing in the way of municipal activity so much impresses one as the number and size of the public parks. Including several smaller recreation places, they contain about eight hundred acres. But, alas! of necessity, all the larger parks are a considerable distance from the central part of the city.

Within the city boundaries up to a few years ago was only to be found Wavertree Park, containing, with the Botanic Gardens, an area of about 43 acres; but of late years great efforts have been made to provide open spaces more convenient for the greater mass of the people. Kensington Gardens, in the east, containing about $18\frac{1}{4}$ acres; Whitby Gardens, in Everton, containing about $2\frac{3}{4}$ acres; Mount Vernon Green, in West Derby, containing 1 acre, are all of recent addition. There are also ten open spaces, formerly burial-grounds, which have been laid out in an attractive form as public gardens. Including three public squares, 22 acres of open space in the closely-built city have thus been secured. It is to be observed, too, that the Municipality had to learn its duty in this matter from the example of a private citizen, the late Richard Vaughan Yates. Mr Yates gave Liverpool its first park, which he named Prince's Park, in 1843. Fifteen years later the Corporation purchased and laid out Wavertree Park and Botanic Garden. Between 1864 and 1872 four parks were provided by the Corporation: Stanley Park (93 acres) on the north, Newsham Park (114 acres) and Shiel Park (15 acres) on the north-east, and Sefton Park (270 acres) on the south-

east. The last-named takes the palm for its size and beauty; next to Jesmond Dene, at Newcastle-on-Tyne, indeed, it is probably the largest and prettiest public park in the provinces. The land was purchased for over a quarter of a million sterling from Lord Sefton, whose building estate in the vicinity was at the same time greatly increased in value. Altogether, the Corporation has spent over £500,000 in purchasing land for parks, etc., and nearly £290,000 in laying them out. In this sum is included, however, the cost of making the Prince's Boulevard, a broad thoroughfare, with a liberal provision of trees and seats, leading to Prince's and Sefton Parks, which redeems one quarter of Liverpool, at any rate, from the charge of ugliness. The annual cost of the maintenance of the parks and gardens is estimated at about £16,000. As the result of this liberal expenditure Liverpool rivals Birmingham, and is far in advance of Manchester as regards the amount of open space provided by the Municipality for every thousand of its population.

Liverpool has been equally well provided with baths and washhouses. There are eight of these institutions in various parts of the city, half of them having come into existence since 1870. To the Liverpool Corporation belongs the credit of having erected the first public baths and washhouses in the kingdom; this was in 1842, when part of the old corporate estate in the most crowded part of Liverpool was devoted to the purpose. At that time, however, laundry facilities were in much greater request than those for bathing, and in 1853 the building was reconstructed and the baths abolished in favour of washhouses. At the present time the contrary holds good.

With the improvement in the dwellings of the working-class the necessity of public washhouses is becoming less, while the demand for the cheap luxury of a swim or a douche is rapidly growing. The Corporation have just sanctioned plans for the reconstruction and enlargement of St George's Baths, at a cost of £60,000. These are provided, by means of a purifying process, with excellent sea-water from the Mersey, and, in consequence, have always been very popular. During the last few years the sea-water has also been carried to two or three of the other establishments nearest to the mouth of the river; the cost of the pipes, etc., was incurred, it may be noted, during a season of drought, when the public baths made a serious demand upon the ordinary water supply of the city. The expenditure on these institutions cannot be exactly stated, inasmuch as the land required in several instances was already corporate property, but the actual outlay cannot have been less than £150,000. Apart from the capital expenditure, they cost between £8000 and £9000 a year; some of the establishments show a profit on the working expenses, others a deficit, but, on the whole, the debit and the credit side just about balance each other. Yet for the great majority of the baths provided, no more than one penny, twopence, or threepence apiece is charged.

In its admirable public markets the Liverpool of to-day clearly owes much to its old municipal rulers. As I have said, at quite an early date the Corporation, corrupt and unrepresentative though it was, obtained possession of the rights of feudal landowners, and consequently in organising its food supply on municipal lines Liverpool has not had to overcome the difficulties that have prevailed in so many towns. In building St John's Market and St James's

Market, moreover, the old Corporation set an example which the new one, having regard to the needs of the rapidly-growing population, could not but follow. As a matter of fact, a market for fish was resolved on in the first year of the new body, and by 1840 the Corporation had become the owners of other markets for cattle and vegetables. In all, Liverpool has seven municipal markets, the last having been built in 1886. In every case there is a balance of receipts over expenditure, the total annual profit from the markets amounting to about £16,500.

A good deal of municipal work in Liverpool can be traced to the stimulus of the inquiry made by the Royal Commission in 1844 into the condition of populous towns, and it was owing to that inquiry that the Corporation obtained their Sanitary Act in 1846, which to a large extent formed the basis of the first Public Health Act of 1848. At that time the borough engineer, Mr James Newlands, was a man of remarkable insight and restless enthusiasm in the cause of sanitary reform. In 1848 he drew up a report on the work which the Corporation might advantageously undertake in accordance with the provisions of the Sanitary Act, and this little book is full of a suggestive interest even now. It anticipated several important improvements made in Liverpool and other cities, while some of its proposals have not yet been adopted either there or elsewhere. The resolution adopting this report, "subject to such modifications in the details thereof, and the regulation of the expenditure as may from time to time become necessary under the circumstances of each particular case," was the beginning of a new municipal policy, which has been continued, with varying energy, until the present day. In regard to the

all-important question of the disposal of the sewage, the Corporation has had comparatively an easy task, the strong tide of the Mersey quickly carrying it out to sea.

It was the new-born enthusiasm for sanitation about this time which led the Corporation to acquire the water supply. It was then in the hands of two companies—the Company of the Proprietors of Liverpool Waterworks, incorporated by Act of Parliament in 1799, and the Liverpool and Harrington Waterworks Company, whose Act was obtained in 1823. The supply was derived exclusively from wells in the red sandstone, and, as already indicated, was grossly insufficient. Probably municipal action would have been longer delayed, however, if it had not been for the urgency of the situation created by the rapid improvement in the sanitation of houses. "House drainage," wrote Mr Newlands, "has proceeded in Liverpool with amazing rapidity—a rapidity, indeed, by far too great with the present deficient and intermittent water supply. Unless immediate steps be taken to give a constant, or at least a daily, supply to all houses . . . the works now in progress, in place of improving the healthiness of the town, will be the means of producing disease."

Such warnings had their effect. An Act of Parliament was obtained authorising the purchase of the property of the two companies, the prices paid amounting together to about half a million sterling. By the same Act, too, the Municipality obtained powers to largely increase the supply. Large reservoirs were constructed at Rivington, between Bolton and Blackburn, in which to store the water of three rivers. The works were begun in 1852, and finished in 1857, at a cost of a million and a quarter sterling. With an extension of the old works of the companies, and the

construction of a reservoir at Chorley, the then existing source of supply was sufficient for a good many years. Early in the 'seventies, however, the question of a fresh supply was raised by experts, who clearly saw that by the time it could be settled the fulfilment of the responsibility undertaken by the Corporation would be endangered.

Even then there were some who maintained that the red sandstone would be sufficiently prolific for half a century to come; but one or two seasons of drought proved the falsity of the premises on which this view was based. At length, after much discussion among all sections of Liverpool people, an Act of Parliament was obtained in 1881, which authorised the Corporation to obtain a fresh supply from Lake Vyrnwy. The lake is eighty miles from the Mersey, and the cost of bringing it into communication with the houses of Liverpool has, from first to last, amounted to somewhat over two millions sterling. For this sum, and at the cost of much personal thought and labour, the Waterworks Committee have endowed the city with an ample supply of pure water for very many years to come. The Corporation has at present a population or about 800,000 dependent upon it for their water, and from all sources it can now obtain 31½ million gallons per day. From Lake Vyrnwy, however, only the first instalment of 13 million gallons per day is obtained; by the construction of a second and a third aqueduct this quantity can be trebled.

The Corporation is legally prohibited from making a profit out of water supplied for domestic purposes. By its act of 1862 it is empowered to impose a water rate of 6d. in the pound on all property in the city, whether taking

a domestic supply or not. Whatever additional revenue is required, is raised by water rents for domestic, and by fixed charges for trade supplies. The Act did not enable the Corporation, however, to impose a water rate on the area it supplies outside the city boundaries; but, in lieu of this, it was authorised to charge there a water rate 3d. in excess of that charged within the city. But experience has proved this to be an inadequate compensation to the Liverpool ratepayers. The water rent in the city is 7½d. in the pound, making, with the rate, a total charge of 1s. 1½d.; consequently, the rent beyond the civic boundaries is 10½d. in the pound. The Corporation is thus in the peculiar position of being compelled to supply a great number of people with water at a less charge than it makes to its own ratepayers. In other words, the Liverpool ratepayers are obliged not only to pay for their own water, but also to help to pay for the water of a population of about 300,000. This consideration considerably detracts from the success of the municipal undertaking. But even with this drawback—and it is one which the proposed extension of the municipal boundaries will largely diminish—it is evident that the citizens of Liverpool have no reason to regret having municipalised their water supply; while upon the teeming population around them their action has conferred a splendid boom.

On the contrary, they have only too much reason to wish that the same policy had been pursued with regard to the gas supply. This is still in the hands of a private company; various efforts on the part of members of the Corporation to municipalise it having been defeated, not so much by open opposition as by dilatory tactics. As

the result, the present charge for gas in Liverpool is 3s. 4d. per thousand, as compared with 2s. 6d. in Manchester, whose municipal gasworks bring in a profit to the ratepayers of £60,000 a year. It should be added, however, that the gas in Liverpool is claimed to be of exceptional purity and power. Making allowance for this circumstance, it is evident that the people of Liverpool, like the people of London, have lost heavily through the continuance of the private ownership of the gas supply. This being so, it might be supposed that when the electric light was introduced it would be by municipal action instead of by the enterprise of a joint-stock company. But although the citizens are not yet the owners of the electric light, they have taken good care that no formidable vested interest in its ownership shall be allowed to grow up. The Act under which the Liverpool Electric Supply Company, Limited, are providing the new illuminant over a limited area of the city, gives the Corporation the power of purchasing the undertaking in 1897, or in any subsequent year, on giving twelve months' notice.

The visitor to Liverpool, walking about its poorer parts, might suppose that by municipal action comparatively little had been done to improve the dwellings of the people. Such an impression would not be altogether just to the Corporation. It is true that for many years it failed to realise the hopeless sanitary conditions of the enormous number of back-to-back houses. It contented itself with what was considered to be the improvement of the courts in which these houses were situated—such as widening the entrances from the street, which assuredly gave the inhabitants more air, but left the sanitary evils of their houses

just as they were. The inadequacy of such a remedy for so great an evil gradually forced itself upon the public mind, and about twenty years ago the Corporation resolved to undertake the utter demolition of this class of insanitary property.

Its progress with this great task has been rather disappointingly slow. According to the most favourable computation, there are still some 8000 or 9000 dwellings of the worst possible type. The Corporation has, of course, had many difficulties to contend with. In the first place, it cannot seize and destroy houses unfit for human habitation as it does food unfit for human consumption. Up till December 31, 1893, it had spent nearly £230,000 merely on the purchase of this insanitary property. But it could hardly plead the monetary difficulty if there were no other to obstruct and delay the beneficent work. Nor would the familiar difficulty—and at the same time paramount necessity—of finding other accommodation for the people unhoused, altogether explain the fact that its self-imposed task is not yet half-completed. It has been found that the people whose homes are demolished do not return, as a rule, to the new houses erected on their sites : their places are taken by people of a somewhat different type of social grade and type of character. Thus, the doom of a number of noisome courts means a considerable disturbance in the social organism of the neighbourhood, and people of influence in a neighbourhood, conscious as they are of the good objects of the Corporation, have been inclined to resent speedy action and to plead for respite. For instance, I was informed that the Roman Catholic clergy in the Exchange and Scotland divisions of Liverpool—the Irish quarters—had sometimes adopted this attitude ; the policy of demoli-

tion drove away large numbers of their flocks to other parts of the city, where it would be difficult to find a Roman Catholic place of worship.

I am inclined to think that the work of clearing away these hopelessly insanitary dwellings would have been much accelerated if those erected in their place could, generally speaking, have been let at the same rents. This is the case, I believe, with the "model dwellings" which the Corporation have themselves erected in place of the old slums. There are only two blocks, however, of these, containing together 373 tenements. For some reason or other, the Corporation came to the conclusion that this class of dwellings would not be popular with the working people of the city, and that other classes of property had better be built and managed by private speculators. Yet, on visiting the Victoria Square Dwellings, I found that only 2 per cent. were vacant, and of the Juvenal Dwellings only 1 per cent. In the former, the rents are as follows:—One room, 2s. per week; two rooms, 3s. 6d. to 4s. 3d.; and three rooms, 5s. to 5s. 6d. In the latter the average rents are slightly higher. The Victoria Square Dwellings cost the Municipality £68,077, and the gross rental amounts to £2996 per annum; in 1893 £2825 was actually received. The Juvenal Dwellings cost £16,166, and the gross rental is £884, the receipts from the tenants last year being £807. In view of the success which these figures would seem to indicate, it is rather surprising that the Corporation has not repeated the experiment. Instead of this, it has sold the freehold of vacant land to private persons on condition that four-roomed cottages are built upon it, but up to the present only about 600 cottages have been so erected. They are let at rents of from 5s. 6d. to 6s. 6d. per week.

The effect of the good work already accomplished by the Municipality can be traced in a declining death-rate. Owing largely to the density of its population, Liverpool has long occupied a very unfavourable position in the Registrar-General's reports. In that for 1892 Dublin alone among the 35 largest towns in the United Kingdom had a death-rate in excess of that of Liverpool. Over the whole city the death-rate in that year was 24.7, but there were startling variations in the different wards. In Vauxhall it was 41.8, in Scotland it was 35.5, in St Paul's and Exchange 38.7, these three wards containing the worst of the "condemned area." In the wards of Rodney Street and Abercromby, Kirkdale and West Derby, on the other hand, the death-rate was only about 19 per 1000. This striking disparity between the mortality of the worst and the best districts cannot but suggest how very much the Corporation might yet do in combating the evils of overcrowding. There is some satisfaction to be got, however, out of a comparison of the present death-rate over the whole city with that of past years. For the decade 1861 to 1871 it was on the average 32.5 per 1000; from 1871 to 1881 it was 28.5, and from 1881 to 1891 only 26.1. In these figures the most vigorous members of the Corporation—those who have done their best to improve the water supply and multiply the open spaces, who have never wearied of the gospel of sanitation, and have been foremost in the campaign against slums—can surely see the justification and the reward of their labours.

In its educational work the Municipality affords a sharp contrast to the spirit which animated the citizens a generation or so ago. To Liverpool men at the beginning

of the century the study of science or literature or art was "the cultivation of a plant that would neither yield them profit nor amusement." As Sir James Picton points out in his "Memorials of Liverpool," failure attended every effort to found a school of art, to establish a scientific institute, or to make provision for the maintenance of an observatory. Yet Liverpool was one of the first English cities to tax herself in order that her citizens might have books to read; the library rate of 1d. in the pound dating from 1852. Everyone who has visited Liverpool of recent years must be familiar with the splendid group of buildings opposite St John's Church and St George's Hall—the Brown Museum and Free Library, the Picton Reading Room and Lecture Hall, and the Walker Art Gallery. These institutions owe much to private munificence as well as civic enterprise, but not quite so much as is sometimes supposed. The Walker Art Gallery is, of course, mainly the outcome of the wealth and local patriotism of Sir Andrew B. Walker, and the same may be said of the Free Library and Museum in reference to Sir William Brown. But the Picton Reading Room and Lecture Hall were built entirely at the cost of the Corporation. They were so named in recognition, not of the money gifts of Sir James Picton, but of his untiring personal service as Chairman of the Libraries Committee ever since it was formed.

In addition to the central establishment, Liverpool has three fine Libraries for the north, the south, and the east of the city, while the designs for a fourth, to be erected at a cost of £15,000, have just been prepared. From these district Libraries more than half a million volumes were lent last year; the issues from the central establishment

numbering about 700,000. The Board Schools in half a dozen other districts, moreover, have been brought into requisition as newspaper and magazine rooms in the evening—a plan which might well be adopted in many places besides Liverpool.

The Libraries Committee of the Corporation have given evidence in their work of great zeal and intelligence, although, *en passant*, in their last report they are responsible, in dealing with the value of free libraries, for the rather irrelevant statement: "Strikes, lock-outs, socialism, and social unrest and discontent are, in a large measure, but the expression of that want of confidence and intelligence (the result of education) which can alone enable people to grasp the industrial problems which arise every day." They have sought to extend in several ways the usefulness of the Municipality as an educationalist. They recently circulated, for instance, a hand-list of the technical books in their charge among the workshops of the city, and a similar plan is to be followed with regard to the valuable collections of works on architecture and music. Since 1867 the Committee have carried on, every autumn and winter, courses of free lectures, primarily intended to arouse interest in the contents both of the Museum and the Library. Last year forty-eight lectures were given in connection with the Library, and twenty-five in connection with the Museum. The former, given in the Picton Lecture Hall, attracted about 60,000 persons. They were divided into two series, one consisting of lectures on such popular subjects as, "Sir Walter Scott," "Up and Down North Holland," and "Old German Cities"; the other of lectures on such comparatively abstruse subjects as "Champollion and the Rosetta Stone,"

and "The Art of Pompeii." Both series, however, had the advantage of lantern or musical illustrations, and it is noteworthy that the average attendance at the one was only 300 less than at the other. The lectures given at the Museum, with the object of describing and explaining its contents, obtained a total attendance of nearly 8000. These seventy-three lectures, it must be added, cost the Municipality only about £200, although, in many cases, fees were paid to the lecturers.

The Walker Art Gallery at Liverpool is to be regarded, I suppose, as the finest example of its kind among municipal institutions. Its history is interesting, as indicating that even in some of the provincial cities the municipal spirit, just now awakening in London, is of very recent growth. Some years before its erection the Corporation became the owners, through presentation or purchase, of a number of works of art, and these had to be deposited in the Museum and the Library. At length difficulty was experienced in thus disposing of them. The need and the value of a Municipal Art Gallery forcibly presented itself to the Libraries and Museum Committee, and in 1873 the Committee ventured to present a report to the Council in favour of the establishment of such an institution. The proposal was hotly opposed by a section of the councillors, supported by a numerous body of the ratepayers, who did not think that catering to the artistic taste and pleasure of the people was "any part of the proper business of the Corporation." The proposal was abandoned, only to be taken up, however, by several public-spirited citizens. A committee was formed and a fund started which soon reached the sum of £7000. There matters might have remained for a considerable

time if, on being elected Mayor, Alderman B. Walker had not offered to erect the building at his own cost, and present it to the town. The Gallery was opened in 1877, and in 1882 the municipal collection of pictures had outgrown its accommodation. In the five years, however, the city had learned its value. The Council promptly voted the sum of £11,500 for an extension of the building. When the extension was completed, Sir A. B. Walker, doubtless much gratified by the turn affairs had taken, sent a cheque for £11,500 to the city treasurer.

The municipal art collection, now numbering about 500 works, costs the ratepayers of Liverpool nothing. Since 1871, the Corporation has conducted every autumn a loan exhibition of modern paintings, and to these exhibitions an admission charge of one shilling, sixpence, and threepence is made—a commission also being paid by the exhibitors, of course on the pictures. With the profits on these exhibitions—amounting on the average to about £2000 per year—the Corporation makes its valuable purchases of some of the best works to be obtained in London and elsewhere. The other half of the collection has been given or bequeathed, mostly by Liverpool citizens, but in some cases by the artists themselves. Sir John Gilbert, for instance, presented the Gallery last year with sixteen of his works. The constant additions thus made to the Gallery serve to maintain the interest taken in it by Liverpool people. In 1893, the sixteenth year of the Gallery's existence, its visitors numbered nearly half a million. This included over 66,000 who paid for admission to the autumn exhibition, and 11,000 school children who were admitted to that exhibition free of charge.

It was only in accordance with the zeal in the cause of education it has thus shown of recent years that the Corporation should have resolved to devote the whole of the money accruing to it from Mr Goschen's increased liquor duties to the provision of technical instruction. The spending of this money has been entrusted to a Sub-Committee of the Library, Museum, and Arts Committee, whose policy has been, not to multiply educational institutions, but to aid and develop the work of those already existing. According to the accounts for last year, the sum of £8318 was allotted as grants to various colleges and schools, in return for which they have thrown open a number of scholarships to the boys and girls in the elementary schools and others. These scholarships are, of course, under the control of the Sub-Committee, and it is worthy of note that by some of them provision is made, not only for free tuition and free books, but also for the cost of the scholar's maintenance, without which the offer of these other advantages to the children of very poor parents is but a mockery. Among the most interesting features of the Sub-Committee's work are the establishment of penny technical lectures and the formation of cookery classes for seamen. The penny lectures are given at the Liverpool University College for the benefit of apprentices and artisans, who are nominated by a special committee of working-men.

For one particular, and to Liverpool all-important, purpose, the Sub-Committee has deemed it desirable to establish an institution of its own—viz., a Nautical College. The College has been started in an extensive building, formerly occupied by the Liverpool Royal Society, and contains separate departments for boys preparing to go to

sea, for apprentices and seamen, and for candidates for Board of Trade certificates, as well as a higher school for officers and masters. In its equipment with necessary apparatus, including an astronomical observatory and equatorial telescope, the Nautical College is said to be equal to any similiar institution in the world. Having been open only eighteen months, it is too soon to judge of the success of this novel experiment in municipal enterprise; but so far the number and character of the students have given every satisfaction. The institution had cost the Municipality, at the end of 1893, £2346, but £447 had been received in students' fees.

The most remarkable feature about the Liverpool Corporation's finance, considering the work it is doing, is the smallness of its debt. For all purposes, except the water supply, the loans amount to only £2,770,000. As I have already indicated, this is due to the large income the Municipality derives from its corporate estate; for the last ten years it has averaged (including interest on investments) £110,000 per annum. The money for all the principal buildings of the Corporation, including the magnificent St George's Hall, which, begun in 1838, and finished in 1854, has obtained a national fame, has been obtained from the same source. On the markets, as I have already stated, a profit of about £16,500 per annum is made; the tramways, which are in all cases owned by the Corporation and leased to private companies, yield a surplus of between £6000 and £7000, which goes in relief of the paving-rate; the water rents and rates provide, of course, for the interest on and extinction of the loans raised in respect to the waterworks. Excluding these, all the debts of the Corporation have now been amalgamated

under a scheme prepared by the deputy town clerk (Mr Harcourt E. Clare), and sanctioned by Parliament in the session of 1893. By this scheme the Corporation is required to pay off £92,000 every year until the whole of the present debt is extinguished, and the ratepayers of Liverpool are saved something like £35,000 per annum.

The rateable value of the city is now £3,200,000, so its debt is less than one year's rateable value. The rates levied this year in Liverpool, excluding the School Board rate of 6d. in the pound, the Poor Law rate, and the charges for water, are as follows:—Parish of Liverpool, 2s. 11¼d.; Kirkdale, 3s. 7¾d.; Everton, 3s. 9¼d.; West Derby, 3s. 10½d.; Toxteth Park, 3s. 6¼d. These figures are satisfactory, except in their variation. The variation in the rates is owing to each parish having to bear a special charge, in respect of its past debt, for paving and sewer purposes. Prior to 1893 each parish had separate rates for paving and sewering, but by the Act of 1893 all separate rating in future was abolished, except for the purpose of paying off existing debts.

This brings me to what is at the present time the most vital question in the municipal politics of Liverpool. There has been no extension of the city boundaries since the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835. Since that date the whole of the available room in the city has been exhausted, even at a ratio of nearly a hundred persons to the acre, and the population has overflowed into the outer districts to the number of about 150,000. These outer districts, to the extent of a population of 113,000, and an acreage of about 10,000, it is now proposed to amalgamate with the Municipality. In the Municipality itself, on the other hand, grave electoral anomalies have

arisen in consequence of the shifting of population. Each of the sixteen wards returns three councillors; but whereas some of these wards have not 1000 electors, others have as many as 10,000, and in one case (Everton) as many as 25,000. The census of 1891 gave a decline of about 30,000, indeed, in the population of the Corporation's area, showing that the present generation were bent more and more upon getting additional air and space. Extension of the boundaries would be desirable if only as bringing with it the re-arrangement of the wards. But it is easy to see that in this question of absorbing the adjoining Local Boards is also bound up the whole of Liverpool's civic future, just as London's civic future is bound up in what is known as Unification. Already the Corporation has been compelled, in doing its duty by its own ratepayers, to provide public parks in the midst of a population who contribute nothing to their cost. But it is evident that if the municipal work of Liverpool is to have full development, the whole population, who share its benefit, must share its cost. When the Liverpool Corporation comes into its rightful inheritance, we may, indeed, expect a new and more eventful era in its municipal history.

IV.—GLASGOW.

Peculiar Features of Scotch Municipal Government — Glasgow's Challenge to other Municipalities — The After-Result of a Tramway Strike—More Humane Conditions for the Tram-Workers under Municipal "Masters" — Cheaper and Better Transit for the Citizens—Financial Prospects of the Undertaking —The Municipal "Doss Houses"—Good Influence of these Establishments upon Common Lodging-Houses generally —Overcrowding and its Penalties — Financial Success of the Municipal Lodging-Houses and Tenement Dwellings — The Purification of the Clyde—A long deferred Blessing—Glasgow's Pioneer Pure Water Scheme — Growing Popularity of the Municipal Laundries—Contemplated Extension on a novel plan of the Baths and Wash-houses—Seven-hundred acres of Open Space — Music in the Parks — Municipal Ownership of the Principal Halls—Popular Concerts carried on by the Corporation —The Lack of Free Libraries—The Blot on Glasgow's Municipal Escutcheon—The Art Gallery and Museum—The Profits from Municipal Undertakings—Gas and Electric Lighting—The Markets and their Management—Municipal Rates, equal all over the City, divided between Owners and Occupiers, and graduated according to Amount of the Rent—The Costless Development of Municipal Activity, and its Beneficial Results—Enlargement of the City.

Before the reform of municipal corporations the government of the Scotch towns presented many points of important divergence from that of English towns. By this and subsequent measures the differences, for all practical purposes, were assimilated and the citizen of Glasgow to-day has much the same experience of local government as the citizen of Manchester or Liverpool.

There are still peculiarities of form, such as the Dean of Guild Court, a municipal functionary in whose name the control of the streets is exercised, and the Common Good, a municipal fund available for general purposes which is derived from the real property of the Corporation, that are survivals of the time when Glasgow was a Royal Burgh and as such took a part in that curious municipal Parliament, the Convention of Royal Burghs. But unlike those of Ireland, Scotch Corporations have all the powers of English Corporations, and, for many years past, Glasgow, at any rate, has been exerting itself to use them to the full.

In the boldness and importance of its recent enterprises, indeed, Glasgow has thrown down a challenge to the other great municipalities of the Kingdom. To begin with the most recent, the Glasgow Corporation was the first to try on a large scale the experiment of municipally working the business of a tramway company. Glasgow, like Liverpool and Manchester, had the wisdom to construct its own tramways; but having constructed them, the lines were, of course, let on lease to a private company. This lease of twenty-three years expired in 1894, and for some time previously the question of renewing it was the principal one in municipal politics. The bargain had not proved a bad one for either the Corporation or the Company. Up to 1891, the total expenditure on the line was £345,000, while, in the same period, the Corporation received from the Company payments amounting to £488,000. For the first three years the Company paid only one dividend of 5 per cent., but from 1875 until last year its dividends ranged from 4 per cent. to 12 per cent., and for ten years

they averaged 10 per cent. The lease would probably have been renewed if the Company had treated its servants with greater consideration. About six winters' long hours and low wages led the men to strike; and before the struggle was over a strong body of public opinion was created in favour of municipalising the tram traffic at the first opportunity.

Nevertheless the Corporation offered to renew the lease if the Company would agree to one or two additional covenants, one of which—that the daily hours of work should be reduced to ten—clearly indicated that the Corporation had in view an improvement in the lot of the employés, rather than the making of profit for the town. The Company, which had been extracting from fourteen to sixteen hours daily toil out of their drivers and conductors, refused to give way, and, in accordance with the strongly expressed wish of the citizens, the Corporation had no alternative but to carry on its business. It offered to purchase the rolling stock at a fair valuation if the Company would give an undertaking not to compete in any way with the tramways. This undertaking the Company refused to give, having already altered the articles of association to enable it to carry on the business of omnibus proprietors; and consequently the Corporation was obliged to purchase brand-new plant. It may be said, *en passant*, that comparing the old cars, if not the horses, with the new, the citizens of Glasgow do not regret that this was so.

It is too soon, of course, to say much about the success of "the new departure." If only both ends are met in the tramways account, Glasgow citizens will have much reason to gladly remember the day on which they

became the proprietors of their tramcars as well as tramway. In the first place, they have the satisfaction of knowing that the men, to the number of 1730, who serve them are reasonably well treated, that their hours are shorter and their wages higher. In the second place, the lines have been extended and the fares cheapened, thus promoting the migration of the poorer class from crowded quarters of the city to the more open and more salubrious suburbs. You can now travel a mile for a half-penny, a red-lamp on the pavement indicating the mile tramway stage; while for longer distances the fares are proportionately cheaper, in one or two cases a ride of three miles costing only a penny. At the same time, the Corporation has already begun to extend the 31 miles of tramway with which the city is already provided in order that—borrowing a leaf from the policy of the Post Office—districts not immediately remunerative might be served. The handsomer and more comfortable cars, on which the City Arms are gaily emblazoned, and the happier appearance of the men—smart uniforms, giving ample protection from the weather, taking the place of the ragged garment with which they provided themselves out of their poverty—complete the satisfaction with which the Glasgow citizen at present regards the latest addition to municipal business.*

Nor is it at all likely that this satisfaction will be short-lived. Although no money necessary to the first class equipment of the system has been spared, a sum of £300,000 covers the expenditure which has been incurred in the purchase of land, erection of buildings, purchase of horses and cars, etc. Of the municipal expenditure on the lines themselves,

* During the past winter the cars have been electrically lighted, both inside and outside.

it is estimated that only £143,000 now remains unpaid, and accordingly this is all that the Corporation funds have been credited with as against the new Tramways Department. Prudence is mingled with enterprise, however, and the Tramways Committee have decided that until they know their business better it would be impolitic to make experiments with electric or cable traction. Nor have they underrated the competition of the omnibuses introduced for the first time into all the principal streets of Glasgow by the old Tramways Company. But even if the people were not determined to heartily support their own municipal undertaking it is inconceivable that omnibuses should prove at this time of day successful rivals to tramcars, and so far no attempt has been made to obtain passengers for them by lower fares. It may be that Glasgow will prove itself able to support both tramcars and omnibuses, as London does; but if either is driven from the streets, it must be the Company not the Corporation.

So far Glasgow's municipality has become most widely known for its model lodging-houses. The main features of these institutions can be seen in the Drury Lane buildings of the London County Council, and comparing them with the "doss houses" which were the outcome of private enterprise in Glasgow and other cities, it is obvious that a great gain has been made by municipal action in comfort and decency. There are now seven municipal lodging-houses in Glasgow (of which one is for women), accommodating in all over 2000 people, and another is projected, which, under the name of the Family Home, is to provide a night's shelter to the houseless father, mother and children. The first lodging-house was built in 1871, and since that date nearly £90,000 have been spent upon them.

But every year the excess of revenue over expenditure has in the aggregate given a good return upon the money invested—that is to say, from four guineas to five guineas per cent. Thus, at no cost to the citizens, the Corporation has been able to bring about an improvement in the homes of the very poor, which has in course of time extended to all the lodging-houses of the city. The popularity of the municipal lodging-houses renders them thus remunerative at charges of 3½d. and 4½d. per night, for as a rule very few beds are unoccupied. Some people go to them night after night as nowhere else can they obtain quarters as good at the price. The matron at the females' house told me of one pathetic case in which an old woman, who, whenever she was able, used to pay for her bed a number of nights in advance. One day she fell ill and died. The money paid in advance for her bed lasted until the very day of her death. She had been an occupant of the lodging-house ever since it was opened over twenty years ago.

The lodging-houses are only part of a large scheme, projected by the Corporation in 1865, for improving the sanitary condition of the city. Its object was to let light, air and sunshine into an area of courts and alleys in which 75,000 people were crowded. In the first thirty years of this century the population of Glasgow trebled itself, and the central districts, which were originally too closely built upon, became terribly congested. As a consequence, the Royal Commission of 1844, on the health of populous towns, reported that the death-rate in Glasgow was 40 per thousand, and that typhus fever never left the city. And at the time the evil was a growing one; in 1821 the deaths per year in Glasgow were one in thirty-six, in 1838

it was one in twenty-six. For some time the Corporation were appalled by the magnitude of the evil with which they had to deal. At length it was resolved to reconstruct the entire district of High Street, Saltmarket, Gallowgate, and Trongate. For this great purpose an Improvement Act was obtained authorising the imposition of a new rate, at 6d. in the pound for the first five years, and 3d. in the pound for the second five years. But the victory of the sanitarians was strenuously contested by a section of the ratepayers who were unable to perceive its true economic significance, and its principal author was defeated at the next municipal elections. The Corporation has since persevered with the scheme notwithstanding an almost unceasing fire of sharp criticism from these citizens of little faith, and at length the policy of its supporters is being fully justified from the financial point of view, as it always was from that of the health of the city. According to the balance-sheet of the Trust up to the 31st May 1894, the total expenditure had been about two millions sterling, the liabilities amounted to £1,039,746, the deficiency in assets being £136,148. If this amount is added to that raised from the rates since 1866—in round numbers £590,000—it will be that the cost of the scheme has been so far rather less than three quarters of a million sterling. For this sum about 100,000 square yards of slum property have been swept away, and in its place healthy dwellings have been built; the city has also gained a large public park. It is also to be observed that a year or so ago the accounts of the Trust began to show a balance on the right side. In 1893-94 a balance of over £6000 was carried to the Excess Liability Account, and since 1891 this excess has been reduced from £155,855 to the present figure.

The cost of the improvement scheme has up to the present been larger than it would have been in consequence of the severe depression from which the Glasgow real estate market suffered during the ten years 1880-90. As a consequence, a good deal of the ground which had been cleared continued vacant for several years. This circumstance was doubtless beneficial to the health of the district, but it produced the most gloomy predictions of the financial grief to which the policy of the Corporation was tending. On the other hand, the financial success which has attended the municipal ownership of both lodging-houses and tenement houses has been of some assistance in falsifying such predictions. I am not in a position to explain so clearly the state of the case in regard to the tenement houses; but the figures I give go far to show that they have been hardly less remunerative than the lodging-houses. Roughly speaking, the cost of eight blocks of tenement houses has been about £30,000; whilst the income for the last financial year was a little over £4000 and the expenses under £1000. These tenement houses include a number of shops and flats of one, two, three, four and five rooms. They have been excellently built, and are liberally provided with open space. For the most part they are inhabited by the working class, the rents ranging from £7 to £25 a year according to the number of rooms.

At the present time the gospel of sanitation, out of which the great improvement scheme arose, is being most vigorously practised in Glasgow in respect to the purification of the river. This long-deferred, much discussed project has at length been well begun by the construction of works at Dalmarnock—at a cost, up to the present, of

nearly £100,000—where what is said to be a most efficient system of filtration, etc., has been adopted. The visitor to these works is presented, before leaving, with a glass of seemingly pure water—liquid extracted from the raw sewage he had seen on beginning his inspection. It is the aim of the Corporation to have the whole sewage of the city thus effectively dealt with before it passes into the Clyde, so that that noble river may be restored to something like its original purity, and the Glasgow citizen will be able to begin his pleasure trip in rowing boat or steamship at the Broomielaw.

The Municipality would doubtless have taken in hand the purification of the river long since if it had not as early as 1853 resolved on the abandonment of the Clyde as the source of the water supply of Glasgow. In taking this step and at the same time entering upon a scheme for bringing to Glasgow—35 miles distant—the water of Loch Katrine, the Corporation set the example which Liverpool, Manchester, and Birmingham have since followed. It is true that, compared with the distance of Manchester from Thirlmere, or Liverpool from Vyrnwy, the loch is quite near Glasgow. But, forty years ago, the adoption of a scheme for buying out the two Glasgow water companies and obtaining an independent supply from the clouds and the mountains, at an estimated cost of a million and a half in less than ten years, implied an amount of municipal enterprise which London has never possessed.

Glasgow is said by experts to have the purest water supply in the Kingdom. At the same time it is the cheapest, and also the most plentiful. The Glasgow water rate is now only 6d. in the pound, and it is estimated that

about 800,000 people in and around the city have a supply for domestic purposes of 33 gallons per day. At the time the Corporation took the water supply into its own hands the rate was 1s. 2d. in the pound. On the other hand, after meeting all its expenses and obligations, including the payment of 4½ and 6 per cent. annuities on half a million stock to the shareholders of the old companies, the Water Commissioners have been able every year to make a substantial profit. In 1893-94 the revenue was £177,950 and the expenditure £135,061. In 1890-91 the balance of receipts over expenses was over £43,000 and in 1889-90 it exceeded £50,000. The capital expenditure on the waterworks now exceeds three million sterling and the sinking fund £730,000. It should be added that Loch Katrine is practically inexhaustible, and that an increase in the supply in proportion to an increase in the consumption will be mainly a question of expenditure on additional aqueducts, etc.

It was not until 1875 that the Corporation decided to make use of its fine water supply in the provision of public baths and wash-houses. It now has five of these institutions, excellently built and furnished at a cost of about £100,000. For many years they were carried on at a loss of two, three and four thousand pounds per annum, but the deficit has now been reduced to about a thousand. The number of bath-tickets in the course of 1890-91 (the last year for which I could obtain the figures) was slightly more than half a million, which, considering the population of the city, indicates that Glasgow is still deficient in facilities for gaining the virtue of cleanliness and the healthfulness of the swimming art. The municipal laundries have been rapidly growing in popularity. In five years the number of tickets issued more

than doubled, and it was estimated that in 1890-91 the linen of 3000 families was washed there. It is worth notice that in Glasgow the municipality itself undertakes the work of the laundry; during 1893-94 it received £1392 for linen which had been washed by attendants at the wash-houses. So far, I believe, the Baths and Wash-houses Committee regard the work they have done as in its nature experimental. They now have under consideration such a wide extension of it as will give to all the people of Glasgow the same facilities for bathing their bodies and washing their clothes as are now enjoyed by those who reside in the immediate vicinity of the existing establishments. One scheme has been suggested of a remarkably comprehensive character. It is proposed that in the rear of every street of houses a small bathing and washing establishment should be erected, fitted with the same facilities as the large buildings now existing, the same charge being made for their use. Mr William Thompson, the General Superintendent of this department of Glasgow's municipal work, believes —and the belief is based on a number of carefully collated facts and figures—that such a scheme would prove not only of the highest benefit to the health and welfare of the people, but would also become financially self-supporting. If such a scheme comes within the range of the practical municipal politics of Glasgow, it probably could be supplemented at comparatively little additional cost by a public supply of hot water.

That the Municipality of Glasgow is capable of taking so broad and comprehensive a view of an important part of its work may be argued from its generous policy as regards open spaces. They contain in all 700 acres, and according to the census of 1891 the popula-

tion of the municipal area was 565,000; thus every 800 of the population is provided with an acre of space for recreation. Even if the population which was added to the city in November of that year by the extension of its boundaries be also taken into account, Glasgow with a population of 656,000 still takes precedence in this matter, even of Birmingham, which has an acre of open space for every 1,300 of its population. Last year the maintenance of the parks, etc., cost £34,000, and £1680 was spent in providing them with music on the summer evenings. The first Sunday in August they were visited by over 200,000 people; while the attendance at 244 band performances numbered nearly three quarters of a million. Of the various open spaces, the largest are Glasgow Green with 136 acres, and the Queen's Park with 90 acres. The most recent acquisition is a winter garden at Kelvingrove, which is a botanical storehouse, and at the same time is admirably adapted for musical performances.

The Corporation is also the owners of the principal halls in the City. The history of St Andrew's Halls is significant as to the superiority of municipal ownership over private enterprise in these undertakings. This splendid building in the west end of Glasgow was originally erected a few years ago by a company, which was never able to pay its way. The halls were taken over by the Corporation at a cost of over £40,000 about four years ago; and the financial result is already satisfactory. Altogether, the Corporation is the owner of eight public buildings of this character, and in respect to each the annual accounts show a substantial balance on the right side. In two of the largest halls concerts are given every Saturday during the winter under municipal

auspices; the prices of admission are only 3d. and 1d. But although artistes of good professional position are engaged, the concerts are carried on without loss to the municipal exchequer.*

The Glasgow Art Gallery owes its inception to the enthusiasm of a private citizen, but its purchase and maintenance have been at the cost of the Municipality. Mr M'Lellan, a prosperous coach-builder, with a fine taste in art, devoted his leisure and a considerable part of his fortune to a collection of pictures "of the various schools of painting in Italy, Germany, Spain, the Low Countries and France, since the revival of art in the fifteenth century." At the time of his death in 1854 the collection numbered 233 works; and, according to the terms of his will the whole of these, together with the extensive building in Sauchiehall Street in which they were stored, was bequeathed to the Corporation. But unfortunately Mr M'Lellan's business affairs were found to be in an unsatisfactory state, and the trustees found it impossible to carry out the terms of the will. Negotia-

* A more noteworthy example of municipal concerts is to be found at Newcastle-on-Tyne. They are under the management of a special Committee of the Council, and are given in the Town Hall every Saturday evening during the winter months. They were started in 1882, and each concert has been attended on the average by 1670 people, the accommodation of the Town Hall being 1700. Although only 3d. is charged for half the seats and only 6d. for the other half, the Committee have been able to engage professional artistes of the status of Signor Foli and Mr Carrodus, and Mesdames Georgina Burns, Marie Roze and Clara Samuel. The aggregate receipts for the eleven years have amounted to about £9000 and the expenses to about £8000. The balance has been used to provide part of the cost of band performances in the parks during the summer. It should be added that the inception of the idea and its successful achievement is chiefly due to an enthusiastic lover of music on the Council—Mr Barker Ellis.

tions were entered into with the Council, and as the result the pictures and their storehouse were purchased for the city at the price of £44,500—£29,500 being given for the building and £15,000 for its contents. The number of works, excluding sculpture, has since been increased by gift and purchase to about 600, and in its value and representative character the collection attracts the admiration of every artist who sees it. But it has never yet been adequately exhibited, the building in which it is housed being unworthy of, and unsuitable to, its purpose. The expenditure of £15,000 on pictures aroused at the outset considerable outcry, which the Council endeavoured to appease by profitably letting a part of the building. Part of the building being used for trade purposes, there was considerable danger of fire; and having been warned by one or two small outbreaks, the Parks Committee, in whom the management of the Art Gallery and the Museum is vested, were obliged by a feeling of prudence to discontinue the loan exhibitions which, in other provincial cities, have been of so much educational value. Until 1878 the Corporation had no statutory power to engage in additional expenditure on the Art Gallery or the Museum; and when an extension of the latter became urgent, the money was raised by the Lord Provost appealing for donations from the citizens. In the meantime, the citizens had learned by visiting them to appreciate the value of both institutions. The sum of £75,000 was obtained for the Museum, which occupies an attractive although rather small building in Kelvingrove Park, and at the present time there is a growing feeling in Glasgow that neither the Art Gallery nor the Museum is quite worthy of the city

and its municipal prestige. A new Art Gallery is, indeed, already building at Kelvingrove—a splendid structure, costing £300,000, the nucleus of which sum was derived from the surplus on the Glasgow Exhibition of 1888.

The latest municipal undertaking is the establishment of a People's Palace similar to that which sprung up in the East End of London in response to the pleasant fancy of Mr Besant. The Palace is to be built on Glasgow Green —the great place of recreation for the East End of the City on the Clyde—at an estimated cost of £20,000. Music in a Winter Garden is to be one of the main features of this new municipal effort to minister to the pleasure of the people.

In strange contrast to its municipal equipment in other respects is Glasgow's lack of Free Libraries. On three different occasions the majority of the citizens have refused to put the Public Libraries Acts into force. There are, it is true, three excellent Reference Libraries to which the public have free access, but these have come into existence through private benevolence, and only one is under the management of the Corporation. These institutions, moreover, are all situated in one street in the centre of the city. Until the people in all parts can take books from public storehouses and read them in their own homes, the municipal life of Glasgow, as compared with all the other provincial cities, will be subject to one serious reproach.

Before coming to consider the cost in hard cash of the municipal work of Glasgow, attention must be given to the markets and the gas supply, which, with the water undertaking, are a source of profit to the city. The net

revenue derived from these three sources, as stated in the accounts for 1893, may be set down as follows :—

Water Supply, . . .	£42,000
Gas ,, . . .	29,500
Markets, ...	3,300
Total .	£74,800

The Gas Supply has been in the hands of the Corporation since 1869, in which time it has been increased from 5,000,000 to 25,000,000 cubic feet per day. When the Gas Company was bought out the price was 4s. 7d. per thousand feet; for 1893-4 it was 2s. 6d. The Corporation paid a little over half a million sterling for the Company's property, annuities being payable on £415,000. The Corporation has since spent about £600,000 in extending the works and improving the supply. Three years ago, having in view the extension of the city boundaries, the Corporation purchased for £202,500 the works of the Partick, Hillhead, and Maryhill Gas Company, which, having to compete with the municipal supply over a large part of its area, was unable to earn dividends that were satisfactory to its shareholders.

Having regard to its experience with the gas, the Corporation was resolved from the first to take into its own hands the supply of electric light. But, on the advice of Lord Kelvin, operations were deferred for several years, and it was not until March 1892 that the Gas Committee were able to supply consumers in the central part of the City with the new illuminant. In the first year's accounts there was a deficit of £1,773, a result to be easily explained by the fact that during

a greater part of the year the capital expenditure was necessarily unproductive of revenue, and in the meantime interest had to be paid on a loan of £100,000. The whole of the machinery and plant has since been brought into use as soon as completed, and the deficit is not likely to occur again.*

The municipal ownership of the markets dates from a time previous to the Municipal Corporations Acts. There are markets for cattle, dead meat, fish, fruit, and vegetables, butter, cheese, and provisions, old clothes, and birds and dogs, besides abattoirs of the best type, and two extensive wharves on the Clyde for the landing of American and other foreign cattle. It is largely owing to the measures taken by the Municipality for its development that Glasgow has obtained such a big share in the foreign cattle trade. The wharves were opened in 1879, and in the first year some 10,000 animals were received there; in 1891 the number had grown to 80,000. These establishments, together with cattle, meat, and fish markets, are under the control of a Markets Committee. The other markets are managed, for some reason or other, by what is known as the Bazaar Committee. This Committee, so-called after the name of the fruit and vegetable market, has also the control, it is of interest to learn, of the municipal halls, and the municipal concerts, as well as the street clocks and the steeples and clocks and bells of fourteen churches. It illustrates the wide-reaching character of municipal work in the present day that duties so various should be entrusted to one Committee.

* According to the balance sheet, May 31st, 1894, the liabilities in respect to the electric light were £127,857, and the assets £129,871—a surplus of £2014.

The Corporation of Glasgow has been exceptionally active in enforcing Sir John Lubbock's Shop Hours Acts. Eight sub-inspectors have been appointed to carry out the Acts under the direction of the chief Sanitary Inspector, and the results of their labour have considerable interest. In the six months ending on August 18, 1894, 7503 visits to shops were made by the inspectors, and 16,000 notice cards containing the main provisions of the law were distributed among shop-keepers. In 376 cases there was clear evidence that young people under 18 years of age were employed for more than 74 hours per week but in only 13 was it necessary to institute prosecutions; in all other cases the inspector's warnings sufficed to secure compliance with the law. By this vigorous enforcement of a humane piece of legislation the Municipality has been able to accomplish incalculable good at a very small cost.

The municipal finance of Glasgow presents several features of exceptional interest. Until 1845 the Corporation levied no rate. Its revenue was wholly derived from dues imposed on all articles of food and drink brought into the city. This revenue was usually in excess of the revenue, and the surplus year by year was invested in real estate in the city. Thus was created the municipal property which is known locally as the Common Good. It was with the income of the Common Good, which in fifty years has more than doubled, that the Corporation brought water from Loch Katrine and established its tramway service. In 1845 the Common Good produced an income of a little more than £15,000, now it has risen to £35,000; and whereas the free assets of the Corporation amounted to £173,783 in 1851, they amounted in 1891 to £518,726.

Then, the rates now levied in Glasgow are practically equal all over the city, and are payable partly by the landlords as well as by the occupiers of houses. Houses of a rental exceeding £10, moreover, are charged with a higher rate than houses of a lower rental. In 1891-2, for example, the municipal rates imposed on the higher rented houses (the difference between parishes did not reach 1d. in the pound) amounted to about half a crown in the pound, but of this from 5d. to 6d. in the pound was payable by the owners. On rents between £4 and £10 the rates amounted to about 1s. 10d., and of this about 6d. was also payable by the owners. The rates on houses of the annual value of £4 and under—it should be remembered, of course, that in Glasgow what in London would be termed "flats" or "tenements" are called "houses"—which were only about 1s. 2d. in the pound in that year, are entirely payable by the owners. The number of houses of the first class was returned as 36,793; of the second, 78,605; and of the third, 8443. For 1893-94 the "high rate" payable by the tenant was about 2s. 3d. in the pound, and the "low rate" 1s. 7d. in the pound. If to such rates are added the School Board rate of 7½d. in the pound and the Poor Rate of from 8d. to 10d., according to the different parishes, it will be seen that the local burdens of Glasgow are light compared with those which have to be borne by the great majority of London ratepayers, who—apart from free libraries, perhaps,—receive so much less in return. The truth is that, thanks to the increasing revenue from the Common Good and the profits from the gasworks, the waterworks, the tramways and the markets, the recent development of municipal work in Glasgow has cost the ratepayers practically nothing. In 1870-71, for example,

the maximum rate was 2s. 2d. and the minimum rate 1s. 6d. in the pound.*

On the other hand, the widening of the sphere of civic activity has clearly had the best results in extending the period and the pleasure of the lives of the citizens. In proof of the improvement which has been wrought even during the last twenty years in the health of the city, I cannot do better than quote a tabular statement made by Mr James Nichol, the City Chamberlain, and the compiler of *The Statistics of Glasgow*:—

In the decade 1871-80, with a population averaging 494,574, the deaths per annum were	14,303
And in the last decade 1881-90, when the population averaged 537,000, the yearly number of deaths was . .	13,132
Giving a diminution per annum to the credit of last decade of . . .	1171
Add for the difference of population .	100
And we have an annual saving in lives of	1271

* In 1874-75 the householder paid, including domestic water supply, on rentals of £10 and over, 3s. 0⅜d. per £; in 1894-95 he pays only 2s. 8¾d.—a reduction of 3⅝d. per £. In 1874-75, on rentals under £10, the householder paid 2s. 3⅞d., against, for the present year, only 2s. 1½d.—a reduction of 2½d. per £. The owners' rate however, shows an increase, having been in 1874-75 3⅛d. per £, while now it is 7⅝d., an increase of 4½d. per £. Dealing with the rate *in cumulo* (occupier and owner combined) a fractional increase appears—it having been in the former year 3s. 4d. per £, as against 3s. 4⅝d. for the current year for houses £10 and over; and for rentals under £10, 2s. 7⅜d. and 2s. 9½d. in the two years respectively.—Statement by the Lord Provost (Mr James Bell) at a Meeting of the Council, December 6, 1894.

As regards the beneficial influence which the Municipality has been able to exercise over the amenities of every-day life by means of parks and gardens, bands and concerts, pictures and books, and the supply of pure water, wholesome food, light and air, it was the recognition of this which, after much controversy over details, ultimately induced independent burghs to throw in their lot with the city of which in the course of time they had come to form a part. The last extension of the city's boundaries took place in 1891, when the population was increased from 565,000 to 656,000, and Glasgow became the second city in the empire. Govan, with a population of over 61,000, according to the last census, Partick, with 36,000, and Kinning Park, with nearly 14,000, still hold aloof; but the time is not far distant when their populations must go to swell the number of Glasgow's citizens and strengthen the vigour of its municipal life.

V.—BRADFORD.

The Model Municipality of its Size—What it has done in Forty Years—Endeavours to Defeat and Delay the Incorporation of the Town—Its Municipal Spirit at first of slow Growth—The Fight for the Water Monopoly—Large Expenditure in Increasing and Improving the Supply—Municipalising the Gasworks—Remarkable Success of the Corporation with the Electric Light—The Corporation and the Tramways—Public Markets and Street Improvements—Remodelling the Central Part of Bradford—The Question of "Betterment"—Leading Cases in Bradford—Abolition of the Slums—The Sanitary Policy of the Corporation weakened by the Opposition of "Vested Interests"—Its Action against the smoke evil—Baths and Wash-houses carried on at a Loss—Excellently provided with Parks—The Municipal Convalescent Home—The "Mayors' Library"—Municipal Books and Pictures—The Municipality and the Technical College—The Conditioning House—Higher Rates and the Return for them—Personal Service and Civic Patriotism—The Municipal Expenditure—The Re-adjustment of its Burden.

NINTH on the list of provincial towns according to the census of 1891, Bradford must assuredly be included in the first half dozen by virtue of the vigour and success of its municipal policy. With a population of 223,388—I am giving the figures for 1894—and a rateable value of £1,071,617, Bradford has been able to accomplish more in the domain of municipal statesmanship than several cities having greater numbers and larger resources. It may be described as the model municipality of its size.

The Bradford Corporation is the owner of all the monopolies upon which, since its creation, the London County Council has been casting its justly envious eyes. It has owned the water supply since 1854 and the gas supply since 1869; the markets became municipal property in 1865; the Corporation, has retained exclusive control over the roads by making its own tramways; and, in accordance with the same principle, it has more recently undertaken the supply of electric light. The Baths and Washhouse Act was put into force as early as 1864, and seven years later the Public Libraries Act. Every part of the town has a public park, it has a good picture gallery, and a Technical College which, considered one of the finest in the kingdom, is largely supported out of municipal funds. Handsome streets have been constructed in the place of a myriad of courts and alleys, and insanitary house-property has been reduced almost to a minimum. A costly system of sewage has been carried out, thanks to which Bradford Beck is one of the purest of streams flowing through a large town. The death-rate has been reduced in twenty years from 27 to 17 per thousand, representing the saving of over 2000 lives every year. And under the rule of its Corporation, Bradford has become what it is to-day from being in 1844, according to the testimony of the Health of Town Commissioners, "the dirtiest, filthiest, and worst regulated town in the kingdom."

When this severe judgment was passed upon the town its government was in the hands of self-elected Lighting and Watching Commissioners and a Board of Highway Surveyors. The Corporation did not come into existence till 1847, the first attempt to obtain a charter under the

Act of 1835 having been defeated by the stolid conservatism of the majority of the ratepayers. It is interesting to read in the light of present-day experience how at Bradford, as well as at Manchester, Birmingham, and other places, there were strong manifestations of affection for the old order of things and the most determined efforts to prevent the introduction of the new. A petition against the charter was signed by 12,187 people, whilst one in its favour obtained only 10,833 signatures. Among the inhabitants who expressed themselves perfectly satisfied with the old system of local government were the vicar and eight clergymen of the town, the ladies of the manor, all the magistrates, and the majority of the professional class. Fortunately the reformers were men of even greater determination than their opponents. Two years later they renewed their application to the Privy Council, and this time, thanks mainly to better tactics, success rewarded their public-spirited exertions.

The municipal spirit in Bradford was at first of slow growth. For some years the Corporation could make little headway with its great work; it was hampered by "vested interests" on the one hand, and harassed on the other by ratepayers of little faith in municipal government. One of its first tasks was to apply to Parliament for an Improvement Act which would empower it to abolish tolls and enforce building regulations, extinguish the manorial rights, supply water and gas, and so forth. In doing this the majority of the Corporation were fiercely assailed by property-owners and by a number of ratepayers who, in their enthusiasm for "economy" at any cost, obtained the sobriquet of "the minority of muck." With the passing of the Act Bradford secured what may be described as the

unification of its local government, the local boards of surveyors being abolished and their powers transferred to the Corporation; but for some time the representatives on the Council of what had been independent townships lost no opportunity of obstructing the operation of the Act. Another striking example of the prejudice and self-interest which the Corporation had to overcome was afforded when it sought to municipalise the water supply.

Bradford hitherto had never had a satisfactory supply of water. It was both deficient and dear. When the Corporation took up the matter in 1852 the Company met them with a scheme of their own for an extension of the supply, and a severe battle had to be fought both in the town and in Parliament before the principle of municipalisation could be established. In the session of 1853 the bills of both the Corporation and the Company were rejected by the Parliamentary Committee. Such was the bitterness of the conflict that the company took legal proceedings with the object of making the members of the Corporation personally liable for the expense which had been incurred —about £8000—in the promotion of their Bill, on the ground that proper notices had not been inserted in the newspapers, as required by law. This action did have the effect of coercing the Corporation into accepting the excessive terms demanded by the Company for the transfer of its property to the town. Each shareholder received £40 for every £20 share, the total cost of the transfer to the Municipality being nearly £240,000.

But further delay would have been very dangerous. The Company was supplying only 500,000 gallons a day for a population of over 100,000 and before the Corporation could carry out its scheme for an increased supply the

town suffered from a water famine. The Bradford Corporation is now responsible for the water supply of a population of about 440,000, adjoining towns and villages to the number of 31 being served by it.* The average daily supply for domestic purposes is about 20 gallons per head. The Corporation manages this department on the principle, not that a profit is to be made out of it for the benefit of the ratepayers, but that the poorest inhabitants are to be plentifully provided with this first necessary of life in as pure a state and at as small a cost as possible. Thus, with an income of £121,451, the department showed a credit balance last year of only £160, 5s. 6d. Altogether, the Bradford Corporation had expended on its water supply up to the end of the last financial year something like £2,400,000. In more recent years considerable expense has been incurred in filtering and purifying the water. This expenditure has had no direct pecuniary return, and consequently in one or two years the balance-sheets have shown that the Water Department had been carried on at a loss. But by the laws of health and domestic economy the increased expenditure has been more than justified. On the other hand, the revenue of the Water Department

* The municipal boundaries have been extended once—in 1881. The Bradford Improvement Bill of that year—which made the thirteenth Act of Parliament obtained by the Corporation—as originally drafted would have added nine local board districts to the municipal area. As passed, however, it added only the townships of Heaton and Allerton, and the hamlets of Tyersal and Thornbury. Their annexation increased the municipal area from 7221 to 10,775 acres. The Bill was stoutly opposed by local gas companies, and in order to obtain its passing the Corporation had to submit to a clause prohibiting it from supplying gas to the districts that were incorporated—a concession to vested interests of which the inhabitants of these districts have good reason to complain.

has rapidly developed—showing an increase of 50 per cent. in a dozen years—and its assets exceed its liabilities by nearly £230,000. At Bradford, it may be added, a constant supply is provided for domestic purposes at a charge based upon the rental value; whilst for trade and manufacturing purposes water can be obtained by meter, thus obviating what is a just grievance on the part of many firms and business houses in London.

After nearly twenty years' experience of the municipalisation of the water supply, the application of the same principle to the gas was accomplished with practically the unanimous approval of the people of Bradford. The Corporation had considerable difficulty, however, in coming to terms with the Bradford Gaslight Company, which had been established in 1821 with a capital of £15,000. After three years' negotiation the Company in 1871 agreed to sell its property for £210,000, and so well satisfied were the directors and shareholders with this result that they joined the members of the Corporation in a banquet to celebrate the event. If the enormous growth which has since taken place in the value of the gasworks could have been foreseen, probably the shareholders would not have rejoiced so heartily with the representatives of the town at large. After meeting all charges, including interest and sinking fund, Bradford had up till March 31, 1894, made a profit on its gas of £373,609, or an average net profit per annum of over £16,000. At the same time, there has been a considerable reduction in the price of gas to the individual consumer. In 1873 it was 3s. 6d. per 1000 cubic feet; it has since been reduced, by several instalments to 2s. 3d., a discount of from 2½ to 12½ per cent.—according to the amount of the account—being allowed for prompt

payment. Moreover, the Gas Committee have for many years lighted the street lamps free of charge, paid the wages of the lamp-lighters, and purchased lamps. With the exception of about £12,000 at present unappropriated, the whole of the additional profits has been used in relieving the rates. Of a debt of £488,623 incurred in respect to the gas supply £115,667 has already been paid off. Altogether, the town has invested in its gas works a capital of over £600,000, and the assets show an excess over liabilities of £164,922.

The electric light enterprise of the Bradford Corporation is a remarkable instance of successful municipal trading. Although it must be regarded as one of the pioneers in the matter, the Corporation did not establish an electric light supply till 1890; and already it has become a source of profit to the ratepayers. On the first eighteen months there was a loss (after payment of interest on loan and contribution to the sinking fund) of £1739, 3s. 4d. In 1892 there was a net profit of £1385, 1s. 10d., in 1893 of £1623, 15s. 10d., and in 1894 of £2138, 19s. 4d., or a return of 10 per cent. upon the capital then expended. The charge made to the consumer, on the other hand, which is 5d. a unit, compares favourably with the charges made by electric light companies. The Liverpool Company, for instance, charges 7d. per unit, the House to House Company (West Kensington) 8d., the Westminster, 6d., and the Eastbourne Company 9d. For motive power, moreover, electricity is supplied at a charge of only 3½d. per unit, and already it has been largely brought into use for working the lifts and hoists in the merchants' warehouses.

An endeavour to substitute electrical traction for the unsightly steam engines on the tramways has not been so

successful. There is a strong feeling in Bradford against these monstrosities of the streets, but according to the directors of the Tramways Company they are practically necessary evils; owing to the steep gradients, horse traction is out of the question, and electrical power is too expensive. In the hope of being able to prove that the use of electricity was economically possible the Corporation contributed £500 towards the cost of an experiment which was made last year on one of the routes by a firm of electrical engineers. It failed to convince the Tramway Company, however, and the new motor was not used as the Corporation and the town had hoped on the latest addition to the tramways system.

For an improvement which would relieve the streets of noise, smoke, and no small amount of ugliness, Bradford will probably have to wait for the municipalisation of the tramcars, as well as of the tram-lines. The opinion of the town seems strongly set in favour of this step; the more so possibly, because under the terms of the lease granted by the Corporation on its constructing the first tramways in 1879—the rent being fixed at £290 per mile for the first ten years, and £300 after—the ownership of the tramways has not been so profitable as it has been to some other municipalities.

Of a capital expenditure of nearly £90,000 on its 21¼ miles of tramways, however, the Corporation has repaid nearly £20,000; and last year there was practically a profit on the year's rents of £2,626, 10s., which was the amount set aside for the sinking fund. When the opportunity comes a few years hence, there is little doubt, I think, but that Bradford will add the conveyance of its citizens in the street cars to its other prosperous municipal enterprises.

Bradford's excellent system of public markets is closely related to the street improvements which have formed so large and expensive a part of its municipal work. The Corporation was led to purchase in 1866 the market rights of the lady of the manor, not merely because it was of opinion that the food supply of a large town should be under municipal supervision and control. The existing market-house was a serious obstacle to any good scheme for the improvement of the central part of Bradford, and the feudal privilege of holding periodical fairs in several of the most important thoroughfares was the cause of much loss and inconvenience to more important trade. In these circumstances, the Corporation agreed to take a 999 years' lease of the manorial rights at a yearly rent of £5000, to be paid to the lady of the manor and her successors, and obtained an Act of Parliament empowering it to pull down the old market-house, and to build such other market-houses and abattoirs as might be necessary. About £225,000 has been expended out of capital under the heading of "markets and fairs," but some part of this amount has really been invested, for the sake of street improvements, in shop and house property and land. Consequently, the Markets Committee had to wait for the development in the value of this real estate before it could obtain full return for its expenditure. Last year's balance-sheet showed, however, a clear net profit of between £2000 and £3000, more than half the money borrowed has been repaid, and there is now no doubt that the market estate will, before long, be a source of great profit to the citizens. Viewing the matter from the point of view of the public good, there can be no question but that the daily wants

of all classes have been infinitely better served since the establishment of the half-dozen or so municipal markets for meat and fish, fruit and vegetables, provisions and dry goods, poultry and cattle. Since their establishment a greatly increased number of people have come into the town from the surrounding district to make their household purchases.

The history of street improvements in Bradford has an instructive bearing upon a question which so much concerns the "light and air" of great towns, and consequently their social welfare—the question of "betterment." When its municipal life began, the centre of Bradford was a congery of narrow streets and darksome lanes. For 30 years the Corporation has been re-modelling the town, and the task has cost over a million pounds, or a fifth of its debt. These street improvements have been made in the interests of the health and convenience of all, but incidentally they have enriched not a few owners of property; and the Bradford Corporation has joined the London County Council in endeavouring to obtain legislative recognition of the principle of betterment. Several examples are given in Cudworth's "Historical Notes on the Bradford Corporation":—"These and other improvements of a similar character were not without effect upon the value of property in the borough. The warehouse known as 'Craven & Harrop's,' at the junction at Charles Street and Hall Ings, was sold for £15,000, after having been withdrawn at auction four years before at many thousand pounds less. A few years later, Messrs Schuster's stuff warehouse was in the market, the site of which was valued at £20 a yard. In 1836, Mr Leo Schuster, the first foreign merchant who erected premises in the town,

gave 25s. a yard for the land, which was considered an extravagant price." In some cases the Corporation has endeavoured to recoup itself for the cost of an improvement by the purchase and re-sale of surplus land, but in only one case (when a profit of £10,000 was made) has it been successful. Nevertheless, its policy in always acquiring enough land, not only to widen a street or to make a new one, but also form building-sites for the frontages of each street, has been fully justified in other ways. At one time this policy was severely condemned as an undue interference with private enterprise, but it is now generally agreed that rights of way and questions of light and air would have hampered these street improvements and rendered them much less complete and satisfactory. It was as an after-result of one of these improvement schemes, by the way, that Bradford's fine Town Hall came to be built. The inadequacy of the old municipal offices (which, as a matter of economy, had been enlarged but a few years before) to the rapidly growing work of the Corporation was being severely felt, when the creation of a new street in continuation of Market Street in 1867 left vacant a very suitable site for the erection of a Town Hall. The "economists" on the Council opposed the proposal that it should be utilised for this purpose, but their victory was not repeated. The Town Hall was built at a total cost, including site, of £140,000. It is a big, handsome building: but few citizens of Bradford could now be found to say that its municipal works are not worthy of it.

Bradford has no slums—that is, compared with London, Manchester, Liverpool, and other cities which grew to a great size before anything like corporate government was

conferred upon them. There are dingy, dilapidated dwellings, but none devoid of light and air and facilities for the ordinary decencies of life. The extensive street improvements, coupled with a vigorous enforcement of sanitary laws, have cleared away slums as we understand them in London. Cellar dwellings have been rigorously closed and destroyed, and such "back-to-back" houses as exist are of an improved type. The Bradford Corporation in its best spirit would have put an absolute veto upon a method of building which, economical of space, is wasteful of health; its attempt to do so was defeated by the organised opposition of the propertied class, assisted by the public ignorance of the hygienic importance of the subject. As long ago as 1860 the Municipality made regulations which required "every building to be used as a dwelling-house shall have in the rear, or at the side thereof, an open space adjoining, to the extent of at least 150 square feet." As the result of the next municipal elections, however, these regulations were modified so as to permit of the erection of "back-to-back" houses provided there was a passage between each successive pair of dwellings. To this comparative freedom from slums at the present must be largely attributable the very favourable position which Bradford generally occupies in the mortality returns of the Registrar-General.

In the cause of health the Municipality of Bradford has spent the civic funds with no grudging hand. It has in recent years, for example, spent nearly £100,000 in purifying the sewage at its outfall into Bradford Beck, the expenditure on this object last year being £6000. Successful as the Corporation has been in preserving the Beck from pollution, it is not yet satisfied that all that can

be done has been done in dealing with the problem of the sewage of a large town ; and it has recently asked the Local Government Board to sanction a loan of £125,000 with which to erect additional works. It cannot be said that as much energy has been shown and as much success achieved in combating the smoke evil, although for several years the Corporation has had an efficient inspector at work. Probably his labours would have a more marked effect upon the pall of smoke which envelopes Bradford if the summonses taken out were dealt with by some other tribunal than the borough magistrates, who are largely owners of tall chimneys themselves. Convictions are generally secured, but the fines imposed are ridiculously small, if it is hoped that they will have a deterrent effect. At one time the public sentiment of the town discouraged any effective action on the part of the Corporation ; by many people the smoke was regarded as a blessing rather than an evil, a circumstance which gave rise to the following rhyme :—

" How beautiful is the smoke,
The Bradford smoke ;
Pouring from numberless chimney-stacks,
Condensing and falling in showers of " blacks,"
All around
Upon the ground
In lane and yard and street ;
Or adding a grace
To the thankless face
Of yourself or the man you meet :
Now in the eye and now on the nose,
How beautiful is the smoke ! "

Even at the present time there is a general feeling of indulgence towards the smoke as the evidence of Bradford's wealth. When it is generally recognised that it is also the evidence

of great waste, the municipality of Bradford, as well as of other manufacturing centres, will probably have for one of its most important and beneficent duties the enforcement of the use of such preventives of this evil as science has already provided. Bradford is not by any means the worst sinner against light and cleanliness, however, among the great industrial towns, and signs are not altogether wanting that it may be the first to realise the pleasanter amenities of life in a community which treats the smoke-producing furnace as one of the worst offenders against its social welfare.

Thirty years since the Bradford Corporation recognised that the promotion of personal cleanliness, as having a direct influence upon health, was a proper subject for municipal concern by putting into force the Baths and Washhouses Act. It is still true to this view of the matter by carrying on these three establishments at a loss, in order that the poor may obtain the luxury of a swim at 1d., a slipper bath at as low a charge as 2d. and 3d., and a Turkish bath for 6d. Last year men, women, and children had about 180,000 baths at a net cost to the rates of nearly £1700. Actuated by the same spirit, the Corporation in 1869 resolved that "it is desirable that public parks and recreation grounds should be established in different parts of the borough, namely at Horton, Bowling, and Manningham." What is more, the resolution was promptly carried into effect. The park at Manningham was purchased for £40,000 from Mr S. C. Lister (now Lord Masham), whose name was given to it in recognition of the pecuniary sacrifice he made by its sale. The park, which contains 56 acres, is one of considerable beauty. Peel Park, which was opened in 1863, is about the same size; and altogether Bradford's five parks contain about as

many acres as its population has thousands. In all, the Municipality has spent about £160,000 upon parks, and is at an annual expense in maintaining them of about £11,000. The parks are well provided with musical performances, but this is the result of voluntary effort, and is not at the public charge.

A rather novel feature of Bradford's municipal work is its Convalescent Home. This is situated in the picturesque district of Wharfedale, near Ben Rhydding and Ilkley Wells. It was the gift of an ex-Mayor, Mr Charles Semon, who presented the building and its grounds, about six acres, together with £3000, on condition that such persons should be admitted to the Home as "cannot afford the expense of going to such places as Ben Rhydding or Ilkley Wells but are not so destitute as to need free quarters in a public hospital." A charge of 12s. 6d. per week is accordingly made, and it is found that this, with the interest on the £3000, more than covers the expenditure. The accommodation is equal to that of a very good hotel, and it is much appreciated; last year the municipal Convalescent Home had 905 visitors, the average length of their stay being about eighteen days. It is under the management of a sub-committee of the General Purposes Committee, and, having regard to its origin, can be taken as a witness to the high esteem in which the citizens of Bradford hold the administration of their municipal affairs.

As in the promotion of health, so in the advancement of education, Bradford municipally has an excellent record. In the establishment of libraries, indeed, the Corporation was in advance of the general body of citizens. In 1868 it passed resolutions in favour of the adoption of the Public Libraries Act—three years before it was put in force by the

vote of the ratepayers. The Central and Branch Libraries and Reading-Rooms now contain about 70,000 volumes, which were last year issued to readers a million and a half times. To this municipal stock of books an interesting supplement is being made by the Mayors of Bradford, who commemorate their term of office by a gift of the books which they would most wish to be read by their fellow-townsmen.

The Central Library, which numbers about 40,000 volumes, shares a handsome building with a Museum and an Art Gallery. The collection of pictures is yet in its infancy, but a good beginning has been made, and, before very long, Bradford will doubtless have a collection worthy of its renown in other spheres of municipal activity. In 1893 spring and autumn exhibitions of the year's pictures were held for the first time under the auspices of the Corporation, with such success that it was decided to repeat the experiment. With characteristic spirit the Corporation resolved to throw open the exhibitions, which included specimens of the work of Aumonier, David Murray, MacWhirter, Lady Butler, Wyke Bayliss, etc., free of charge on Saturdays and Sundays. As the result, the visitors on these two days numbered nearly 200,000; on the other days of the week, when 6d. was charged, only about 3000. But the Art Committee did not contemplate making a profit out of these exhibitions, as is done in some towns, which are henceforth to be one of the features of Bradford's municipal work. In the Museum, it should be added, a library of art books has been started which already numbers a thousand volumes.

The Library rate in Bradford has been voluntarily increased to 1¼d. in the pound, which now produces £5000 a year. There has been spent out of the Borough

Funds on the Central Library and Museum and the eight Branch Libraries and Reading-Rooms nearly £75,000. The Central Library now receives a little assistance also from the Exchequer Contribution Account. The "drink money" which has gone to Bradford since Mr Goschen's Act of 1891, amounts to £20,063; and the whole sum has been applied to education, the Library receiving £1900. The remainder has gone in the form of grants to the School Board, the Technical College, and other institutions. The Technical College has received more than half the total amount, its annual grant of £3000 representing more than a third of its income. In return for this contribution the Municipality has obtained 300 scholarships and a considerable share in the management of the institution. The College has 1200 pupils of both sexes receiving instruction in all branches of science and art and in the principal industries of Bradford, such as dyeing and weaving. With so large a number of scholarships and a strong tendency towards low fees, the institution is probably destined to become a municipal institution at no distant date. As it is, the civic pride which the policy of the Corporation has done so much to cultivate, was largely the cause of the movement in 1880-82 among the Bradford merchants for the establishment of an institution which should be a worthy compeer to the Yorkshire College at Leeds.

In connection with the Technical College there has been established a municipal institution which is the first of its kind in the United Kingdom. This is the Conditioning House, in which the true weight, length, and conditions of Bradford's principal articles of commerce are determined scientifically and by an impartial authority. Goods are brought in bulk to the Conditioning House, and

there, with the aid of various machines and appliances, subjected to tests that show the percentage of moisture, oil and fatty matters in the wool, yarns and cloths, the percentage of cotton and wool in mixed yarns, the breaking strength of fabrics, etc. Such information, embodied in an official certificate, is of the highest importance to merchants and manufacturers; and in nearly every case of dispute between buyers and sellers, resort is now made to the Conditioning House. The institution, which is, of course, a common one on the Continent, was established by the Municipality in 1887, on the suggestion of the Bradford Chamber of Commerce, and has been in all respects an unqualified success. In 1893-94 no fewer than 22,728 tests were made, the goods brought to the Conditioning House weighing in the aggregate nearly eight and a half million pounds. In the same period the fees for testing amounted to £1208, 14s. 6d., while the expenses were only £1008, 16s. In many cases the tests were made for the purposes of arbitration cases, and in Courts of Law the certificates of the Conditioning House can be tendered as legal evidence. Seeing that the new institution has been so warmly appreciated by the commercial community of "Worstedopolis," it is not surprising that Manchester has resolved to follow Bradford's example.

Critics of the spirited policy of the Bradford Corporation truly say that it has had as its sequel a considerable increase in the rates. Since 1879 the rates—Bradford is blessed with an equal system of rating all over the municipal area—have increased from 3s. 11d. in the pound to 6s. 1d. This latter figure—which is for the current year—included 11d. in the pound for the School Board and 7d. in the pound for the administration of

the Poor Law, leaving the rate for which the Corporation is responsible 4s. 7d., of which 1s. 6d. is on account of the Street Improvement Committee. There would be nothing alarming about these figures for the ratepayers of London; it would be well, indeed, if every quarter of a million of the population of London could enjoy at the same cost the municipal advantages that Bradford offers to its citizens. But this large increase in fifteen years has severely tested, it may be supposed, the faith of the people of Bradford in their municipal government; their faith has stood the test, and, so far from any sign of reaction manifesting itself, all parties on the Corporation are more or less in favour of extending still further the sphere of its activity for the good of the town as a whole. That it is so, is the best possible comment on the character of the men the citizens have found to serve them at the Town Hall. Every intelligent citizen feels and knows that the great improvement in the welfare of the town which has been brought about by municipal action—the saving of lives, and the bettering of health, the cheaper and purer light, water and air, the enlarged opportunities for mental culture, social pleasure, and athletic sport—represents not merely the expenditure of public money, but also the devoted and faithful service of members of the Council which cannot be put into figures. An incident which occurred only last year will illustrate the high conception of civic duty that has been brought about in Bradford. A fire broke out at the Scholemoor Small-pox Hospital, which is under the management of the Sanitary Committee of the Corporation. The Vice-Chairman of this Committee, hearing of the occurrence, hastened to the scene and assisted in removing the patients,

with the result that he contracted the disease and died within a month.

The total expenditure of the Municipality last year exceeded one million and fifty thousand sterling, but of this sum less than a sixth was expenditure from the rates. At the same time, the Corporation's balance-sheet showed an excess of assets over liabilities of about one and a half million. There is nothing unsatisfactory about these figures. But the growth of the Corporate debt, and the consequent increase in the burden of rates, has prompted inquiry at Bradford, as elsewhere, into the justice of the present incidence of local taxation. In its existence of less than fifty years the Corporation has borrowed nearly six million sterling, and has repaid a little more than a million, its present indebtedness amounting to £4,722,619. The number of years allowed for repayment has varied from fifteen to one hundred years. There can be no question, there is no question among those who remember the town forty years ago, that in various ways Bradford has received value for this money manifold. But it is clear that the burden of this debt is not fairly adjusted to the benefit that is individually derived from it. I have spoken of the adoption of the principle of "Betterment" by the Bradford Corporation; there is reason to think that it signified much as to the trend of opinion both in the Council and among the general body of the citizens. There is little danger, I think, of Bradford falling back from the vigorous and enlightened municipal policy on which it has entered. But it is more sensible, I think, of the difficulties under which such a policy is placed by the present system of rating, and may be expected to give its strong support when some united effort is made by municipal bodies to place that system on a juster and more equitable basis.

VI. LEEDS.

An Old Corporation—Curious History of the Water Supply—The Beginning of an Active Municipal Policy—The Achievements of Thirty Years—More Open Space than any other Provincial City—Woodhouse Moor and Roundhay Park—The Allotment Gardens—Profits on the Gas Undertaking—Eight Months' Municipal Working of the Tramways—A Success to be Quoted—The Public Markets—The Re-construction of Streets, &c.—Municipal Activity in the cause of Health—How the Refuse of the City is disposed of—The Central Library and fifty-three Branch Libraries—The Art Gallery and Museum—The Unequal Rates of the City — The Balance-Sheet of the Corporation—The Municipal Future of the City.

Leeds has a municipal history of more than 250 years. It was incorporated in 1626 by a charter of Charles I., which constituted a Town Council of one alderman, nine "principal burgesses," and twenty "assistants." A second charter was granted by Charles II. in 1661, was in suspense for a time, restored by William and Mary, and is still in force so far as it is consistent with the provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act.

But whilst these circumstances are of much historical interest to the people of Leeds, they cannot be said to have had much influence upon its civic welfare. It appears from a Minute in 1798 that the Corporation had then no funds, excepting the interest on a capital of £1800, which had accrued from fees of admission, or from fines paid by persons refusing to serve. The

town had, it is true, under an Act of 1790, a public supply of water, but this was in the hands of a body of Commissioners specially created by this Act, which also conferred upon them powers for lighting and cleansing the streets, and for preventing nuisances. The Commissioners, who raised the necessary rates for these purposes, had their powers extended in 1824 to enable them to effect street improvements which, with an increase of the population from 53,162 in 1801, to 83,796 in 1821, had become urgently necessary. Very little was done under this Act, however, by the Commissioners or the Corporation, which in 1835 took over their duties, and in 1842 it was superseded by one of still larger scope.

With the important exception I am about to mention, the active work of the Municipality cannot be said to have begun till about 1866. The history of the water supply in Leeds is probably unique; from public ownership it passed into private hands, and from private hands it passed again to public ownership. By an Act of 1837 the old Commissioners transferred the property to a company with a capital of £91,500. No purchase money was paid, the only condition made by the Commissioners being that the company should take over their debts and liabilities. At the instance of the Corporation, however, a clause was inserted requiring the company to sell the undertaking to it at the end of twelve years. If the Corporation should then desire to purchase it, the amount subscribed by the shareholders was to be paid, together with the arrears, if any, which might at the time of purchase be required to make up the interest on every share to the full

statutory amount of £6 per cent. per annum. Two years before this period expired the capital of the company was increased to a quarter of a million, and the Corporation obtained the right to appoint half the directors. This dual system of private ownership, and municipal control quickly came to an end, and in 1852 the Corporation purchased the water-works on the terms set forth in the Act of 1837, the total price being £225,730.

The Corporation has since spent an additional million and a half in improving and increasing the supply. In the last ten years the daily consumption of water has increased from eight millions to thirteen millions, an increase of over 60 per cent. as compared with an increase in the population of only about 20 per cent. The water is brought from the River Washburn, a tributary of the Wharfe, and a constant service is provided for domestic use. A water rate is levied, varying from 4s. on houses of the annual value of £4 to £10 on houses of the value of £250 per annum; but where water is used for manufacturing purposes it can be obtained through a meter at a charge of 6d. per thousand gallons. In 1883 the water supplied in this way was on the average a little less than 2,000,000 gallons per day; in 1892 it had increased to 3,300,000. In developing this fine water supply the Corporation has made large profits for the ratepayers generally. In 1893-94 the balance of the year's income over expenditure was £24,434, of which amount about £17,000 was applied to the redemption of loans, and over £7000 to the relief of the rates.

Since 1867 (that is, during the reign of a democratic municipal Electorate) in contrast with its inertia for the

preceding thirty years, the Corporation has accomplished a great amount of good work. It has municipalised the gasworks and—as I have shown—greatly improved the water supply; it has constructed a new system of sewage, and made several important improvements in sanitation generally; it has established public markets and municipalised the tramways; it has carried out great street improvements and swept away a vexatious system of tolls; it has brought into existence a number of public libraries, a museum and an art gallery and endowed technical education; it has built hospitals and taken vigorous measures in the interests of public health; it has made the most bountiful provision of open space for the pleasure and recreation of the citizens, and it has secured for some of them the boon of allotment gardens.

In these two last-mentioned things the Leeds Corporation has distinguished itself from the other great Municipalities of the country. In proportion to population it is the owner of more acres of open space than any other city, and it was the first great Municipality to put into force recent legislation respecting land for allotment. Both circumstances can be attributed—the one directly, the other indirectly—to the extraordinary size of the municipal area of Leeds. It measures 21,572 acres, and includes, of course, a large portion of agricultural land. With a circumference of 31 miles, Leeds has been untroubled by any question of extension of boundaries; and in the provision of parks the Municipality has been able to exercise a wise and economic forethought without feeling that at the expense of its own ratepayers it was largely benefiting a population over whom it had not, and might never have, any jurisdiction. Its fifteen parks

and open spaces contain 663 acres, or nearly two acres to every thousand of its population of 367,000. With the exception of Woodhouse Moor, they have all been opened within the last twenty-five years. Altogether £240,000 has been spent in the purchase of these parks and open spaces, and in 1893-94 their maintenance, &c., cost £25,000. By its Improvement Act of 1893 the Corporation was empowered to spend £500 a year on musical performances in the parks.

The circumstances under which Woodhouse Moor became a place of recreation in 1857 have rather an exceptional interest. A large piece of waste land, from time immemorial given over to swamp and bog, a public-spirited citizen was one day seized with the idea of converting it into a public park. He urged the idea again and again upon his fellow-townsmen, but they only ridiculed it as impracticable. But the man was an enthusiast. He changed his residence so as to be close to the Moor, and early morning and late evening—before and after his daily work as a journalist—throughout the summer he plied his pick and shovel there with the object of demonstrating the feasibility of his scheme. In this object he succeeded. Influential members of the Corporation became his warm allies, and in the result Leeds had its first public park. Thus brought into existence by a remarkable object-lesson in civic patriotism, for a surprisingly long time it was the last as well as the first.

By the acquisition of Roundhay Park in 1870, however, the Municipality made a noble beginning to a policy it has since actively continued. This fine estate consisted of 774 acres. Three hundred were laid out as a public park, 61 have been sold for building purposes, and 413

are let to farmers and gardeners, pending the maturing of the full residential value of the land. Roundhay Park is about a mile and a half from the centre of the city, to which it forms so beautiful and attractive a place of resort. As the inevitable result of the lateness with which the "open space" movement was begun, whilst the suburbs have each their "lung" the central area is entirely built over. Of the places of recreation owned by the Municipality only one has been presented to the city—viz., Kirkstall Abbey and grounds, which were given by Col. North in 1890. To the grounds (about 15 acres) as purchased by him the Corporation has since added six acres by purchase from Lady Cardigan.

Under the Allotments Act the Corporation has purchased two sites in the city for the purpose of letting them out as allotment gardens. The first, which was opened in June 1892, contains about 46,700 square yards in the district of Burley, and is divided into 104 allotments, varying in size from 243 to 550 square yards. The second, situated in the district of Harehills, was offered for hiring in February 1892. It contains about 28,000 square yards, and is let in 77 allotments of from 252 to 519 square yards each. The rents have in all cases been fixed at one penny per square yard, payment being required three months in advance, and on these terms there has been, I believe, a keen demand for the allotments on the part of thrifty working men and others, to whom they offer recreative and remunerative occupation in spare hours. In the purchase and preparation of the land, the Corporation has incurred a capital expenditure of about £7000, and it is anticipated that from the rents of the allotments it will easily be able to meet all charges.

Leeds has had nearly twenty-five years' experience of the municipal ownership of gas, with the result that the price of gas is now 2s. 4d. per thousand, and that on the balance-sheet of the undertaking there is a surplus of £215,227. On the account for the year 1892-3 there was a profit of £13,259. Before 1870 the supply of gas in Leeds was "exploited" by two companies, for whose property the Corporation had to pay a sum of nearly £700,000. It has since expended another half million sterling on the extension of the works.

Electric Lighting is not yet a municipal undertaking. The Corporation obtained a Provisional Order in 1892, but ultimately resolved to permit a company to supply the light within the city. This company is now at work and is, I am told, gradually extending its works to meet the increasing demand for the new illuminant. The Corporation has an installation of its own for the lighting of the Town Hall and the municipal buildings; but, having entered into a contract with the company, the use of this is to be discontinued. Having regard to the very satisfactory experience of the neighbouring Corporation of Bradford in the municipalisation of the electric light, the members of the Leeds Council must be beginning to doubt the wisdom of their abdication in favour of the directors of a dividend-making company.

On the other hand, the Corporation has already good reason to rejoice that early in 1894 it undertook the working of the tramways. The inefficiency of the tramway service and its hardships for the employés had long been a cause of public dissatisfaction. The property of the company—cars, engines, horses, depôts, &c.—was taken over by the Corporation in accordance with the terms of

an arbitrator's award, the total municipal loan raised for the purpose being £130,000. On beginning its work in February last year, the first care of the Tramways Committee, in response to a clearly voiced public sentiment, was to increase the wages and reduce the hours of drivers and conductors at an increased cost per annum of about £3000. Several improvements were also made with a view to the greater convenience and comfort of the public, with the result that in the eight months—February to September 1894—the Corporation carried about half a million more passengers than did the company in the corresponding period of the previous year.

Although the Municipality of Leeds has not gone into the business with as much spirit as that of Glasgow, the financial result of its experiment has so far been not at all unsatisfactory. For the first eight months—and at the moment of writing the figures are not obtainable beyond that period—there was a gross profit of £5676, os. 4d., or £4519, 6s. 10d., after a liberal allowance for depreciation. Interest on the loan absorbed the sum of £2967 9s., leaving a net profit of £1552, 4s. 6d. Nominally there was a deficit on the eight months' working, however, of £404, 7s. 6d., the Committee making a contribution to the sinking fund of £1956, 12s. But as the repayment of the loan would leave the Corporation in free possession of the tramway business, it is obvious that in the ordinary sense of the word the sum of £1552 was its profit on the eight months' trading. Had the undertaking remained in the hands of the company the whole of the gross profit, minus only the sum of £1156, 6s. 10d. allowed for depreciation, would have been available for distribution among its shareholders in the form of dividend.

Considering that in the first eight months of municipal ownership such a result was obtained, side by side with more generous treatment of the tram-workers and better facilities for the travelling public, the experience of Leeds can be confidently appealed to in support of the movement for municipalising the tram service generally.*

The Leeds Corporation is the owner of three markets, a weights and measures office, and the Corn Exchange. The largest of the three markets has taken the place of a great deal of insanitary property at Kirkgate; besides extensive covered buildings, it has a large open space where market gardeners and others can exhibit their produce for sale. In 1892 the revenue of the market was £13,087 as against an expenditure of £4124. The comparatively small Central Market had an income of £1483 as against an expenditure of £171. The Victoria Cattle Market showed a surplus of nearly £500, the receipts being £1414 and the expenses £949; and the Corn Exchange of nearly £1600, the receipts amounting to £2,392 and the expenses to £803. Thus the Markets Committee added to the municipal funds for the year the sum of about £12,000. Altogether, the Corporation has incurred a capital expenditure in respect to markets of £262,103, and the profits are accordingly at the rate of rather more than 4½ per cent. The rights of the Corporation, by the way, as the sole market authority in the city of Leeds, were confirmed in its general Act of 1893. The expediency of such rights

* It should be added, perhaps, that an electric tramway to Roundhay Park has been for two or three years in the hands of a private contractor, to whom the Corporation has granted a concession, renewable yearly.

being vested in the Municipality is not questioned by any residents of Leeds to-day; and the casual visitor, in walking through Kirkgate Market, cannot fail to bethink of the great boon it must be to the hundreds and thousands of poor housewives living in the neighbourhood, although its general arrangements may compare a little unfavourably with those of the markets belonging to the Municipalities of Birmingham or Bradford.

It is difficult whilst walking about Leeds to-day to picture it as it was thirty years since, before the Municipality had spent nearly three quarters of a million on street improvements. The widening of Boar Lane, the extension of Briggate, the demolition of the old Cloth Hall, and the creation of "City Square" in its place, the erection of a fine new bridge across the Aire, and the making of a street from this bridge to Hunslet Road and the widening of Kirkgate—these, with a multitude of smaller improvements, have freed Leeds from its meanest features, although it cannot yet be described as a handsome city. These changes have been made at a cost of about £640,000. But the improvements in the streets of Leeds have not consisted merely of increasing their width and reconstructing houses and shops. Thirty years there ran through the city a number of streams—locally called "becks"—which having only a sluggish flow, often produced offensive smells, and were in warm weather serious nuisances. Having obtained in 1866 a special Act of Parliament to enable it to do so, the Corporation spent about £42,000 in stone lining or culverting these streams, straightening their course, and otherwise rendering them inoffensive to the health of a thickly populated city. The Corporation has also had to expend £77,000

in freeing the bridges and streets from toll-gates and obstructive bars.

Beyond destroying a number of slums in the course of street improvements, the Leeds Corporation has at present done little to improve the dwellings of the poor, which are, I believe, most sadly in need of improvement. It has not yet felt called upon to clear away the insanitary areas and build upon them tenement houses or cottage dwellings; but having regard to the activity which, as will be seen, the Corporation is displaying in the promotion of the public health generally, it may be expected that work of this kind will not be much longer delayed. This awakening to its responsibilities in regard to the physical well-being of the city only last year led the Municipality to undertake the establishment of public baths.

To the present-day activity of the Corporation in the promotion of the public health the last annual report of the Sanitary Committee eloquently testifies. It occupies over 200 pages, and includes a searching examination into the mortality of the city and its causes, detailed information respecting houses in which cases of infectious disease occurred during the year, and a full account of the work of the Medical Officer of Health and his assistants in the inspection of workshops, dairies, bakehouses, lodging-houses, canal boats, and the examination and analysis of food. Dr J. Spottiswoode Cameron, the Medical Officer of Health, makes some interesting comparisons in these pages between the mortality in houses which are "back-to-back," and houses which have the benefit of a through current of air, houses which have the best sanitary arrangements and houses deficient in that respect—all of

which throw a strong light on the importance of his department of municipal work. The Corporation of Leeds, by the way, has now what all Municipalities ought to have — legal power to prevent the building of any more "back-to-back" houses. Dr Cameron also gives us some information of considerable interest respecting dwellings which, on inspection, were found to be "sanitarily unsafe." In the course of 1893, 9379 houses were examined and in 5181 sanitary defects were discovered, equal to 55 per cent. In 1892 the houses "sanitarily unsafe" were 63 per cent., and in 1891 they were 70 per cent. It may be of interest to add that the Medical Officer of Health is paid a salary of £700, and that he has under him a staff of inspectors and clerks whose aggregate salaries amount to £3458.

In addition to several hospitals the Leeds Corporation has a Sanatorium, where relatives, &c., of persons found to be suffering from infectious diseases can be detained till the danger of the infection declaring itself in them is over, and a Convalescent Home. In respect to hospitals, &c., a capital expenditure of nearly £100,000 has been incurred, and for 1893-94 the annual expenditure was about £12,000.

In Leeds the whole of the refuse of houses, the markets, &c., is disposed of by means of those inventions which are becoming known to municipal bodies as "Destructors." The city is now provided with three of these establishments, where between 50,000 and 60,000 tons of refuse are consumed in fire during the year, instead of having to be conveyed to depositories some distance from the city. The annual cost of the "Destructors" is about £6000, but from this amount must be deducted about £900

which is realised by the sale of mortar produced in the "Destructors." In this economical fashion the Corporation of Leeds has solved since 1878 one of the most difficult problems with which municipal bodies have to deal. The city's sewage system, on the other hand, is still incomplete. It has already cost the Municipality half a million sterling, and the Leeds Improvement Act of 1893 provides for the expenditure of about £200,000 more.

The Leeds Town Hall, where free organ recitals are given of an afternoon by Dr Spark, the city organist, is, it is rather surprising to learn, nearly forty years old. It was built in 1856-58, when the work of the Municipality was small, indeed, compared with what it is to-day. But even in this big structure it has been found impossible to carry on this ever-increasing volume of work. A few years ago a fine building was erected in proximity to the Town Hall, which, at a total cost of about £130,000, serves the several purposes of municipal offices, Public Library, and Reading-Room, Art Gallery and Museum. By this composite and doubtless economical arrangement some sacrifice has been made of the value of the Reference Library. The exigencies of space have caused it to be placed at the top of the building, and eighty-four steps have to be ascended before it can be reached. This circumstance has had its inevitable result upon the use to which the books are put. In 1888-89 the issues in the Reference Library—which contains over 45,000 volumes—numbered 122,466; in 1893 they numbered only 111,451. So far as I am aware, this is the only instance of a Public Library in one of our great towns being on what may be termed the "down grade."

Apart from this unfortunate blunder, the principle of the

Public Library has obtained a vigorous growth in Leeds. It has more branch libraries than any other city in the kingdom. They number fifty-three and contain over 90,000 volumes; of these thirty-one are for the exclusive use of children. There is also a special library of books with raised letters for the blind, whose number in Leeds is about 400. In all, these libraries contain over 182,000 volumes, and in 1893 nearly £6600 was spent upon their maintenance. In the course of the year the number of books was increased by over 8000; but nevertheless the Libraries and Art Gallery Committee, in their annual report, state that the amount obtainable from the penny rate (£5439, 11s.) and other sources was "inadequate for properly maintaining and extending the work entrusted to the Committee, and the time is fast approaching when the whole question of 'ways and means' will have to be considered."

Of the proceeds of the penny rate £800 was in 1893 contributed to the expenses of the Art Gallery and Museum. The balance-sheet of this institution shows an expenditure considerably more than this sum, but most of the items have reference to the loan exhibition, which is held every spring. The Committee obtain recoupment for these expenses from commission on the sale of pictures and small charges for admission. In respect to the last spring exhibition there was an adverse balance of only £3; although out of 50,607 visitors 2355 were school children, who were admitted free. The Committee have wisely abandoned a practice of closing the entire Gallery during the continuance of these exhibitions, which last about one hundred days. The loan collection is now so arranged that, at the same time, the greater part of the

Gallery containing the permanent collection can be open free of charge. This collection is of the estimated value of about £15,000, of which amount about £12,500 is represented by works that have been given to the Corporation. The great difficulty of the Municipality in doing what it wishes to do for the art education of the people is its lack of power to raise the necessary funds.

This difficulty has, during the last year or so, been partially met by the grants made to the Art Gallery Committee out of the money which the Corporation has received from the increased excise duties. In 1893 this amounted to £6245, and £800 was voted for the purchase of pictures. The remainder was devoted to the assistance of such technical instruction as is given by the Leeds School Board, the Yorkshire College, the Mechanics' Institute, &c. The School Board received £3000 and the Yorkshire College £950.

Like the London County Council, the Corporation of Leeds was probably under some temptation to apply the money it receives from increased liquor duties to the relief of rates. Compared with those of Birmingham, Liverpool, and Glasgow its rates are rather high, although they cannot be so described when compared with those of most London parishes. By the Improvement Act of 1893 four separate rates for sewers, highways, street improvements and public lighting were consolidated into one, but Leeds has not yet obtained anything like uniformity in its rating. The amount in the pound differs, indeed, in almost every one of the eleven townships forming the city; including the School Board rate of 1s. 1d. in the pound, the maximum in 1893-4 was 5s. 11d. in Chapel Allerton, and the minimum 4s. 9d. in Beeston,

the amount payable by Leeds proper being 5s. in the pound. The rates for whose expenditure the Corporation was responsible varied from 3s. 10d. in Chapel Allerton to 2s. 4d. in Beeston.

The municipal debt of Leeds at the 25th of March 1894 stood at £4,976,542. Of this amount over £2,700,000 had been incurred upon the remunerative undertakings of the gas and water. As against the borrowing powers of the Corporation it has still £1,200,000 to expend, and on the aggregate balance-sheet its surplus of assets over liabilities was £1,351,000. Its sinking fund investments amount to about half a million sterling, and stock to the amount of about £100,000 has been cancelled.

In 1893 Leeds received an Order in Council conferring upon it the dignity of a City. The Corporation appears to be bent upon justifying its new honour by renewed vigour in municipal well-doing. In the same year it obtained the Act, to which I have already had occasion to refer, under whose authority it has begun a fresh series of street improvements, the completion of its sewage system, and the construction of works for the better disposal of the sewage, and for the extension of the gasworks and waterworks. For these purposes the Corporation, as I have already indicated, has large borrowing powers. Of the six great Municipalities with whose work I have dealt, not one has had in its time a stronger bias in favour of private enterprise in matters which are of public concern. But even in Leeds this bias is rapidly giving way before the weight of experience in other cities, and it may not be very long before "the commercial capital of Yorkshire" in its municipal work as a whole is abreast of the best of them.

CONCLUSION.

THE doctrine of "Compensation," which Emerson so steadfastly held, has in it, perhaps, more of comfort than of truth. But, if he were writing his well-known essay to-day, Emerson would certainly find another powerful illustration of its verity in the growth of English cities, on the one hand, and the development of their municipal organisation, on the other. The gravitation of our race from the country to the town is often lamented as producing and emphasising such evils as dirt and disease, overcrowding and crime. But there is 'another side to the shield'—the side which is now beginning to come into prominence. The cure for these evils can be largely found in their causes—which sounds like a paradox, but is yet a truth. If the concentration of many people on a small area causes the conduct of everyone to be of concern to the welfare of the whole, it also enables collective control to be exercised over the individual with little difficulty or expense. If it deprives the individual of some of the pleasures of life in fields and by hedgerows, it also enables him to obtain others which in a village are impossible.

These considerations are merely the commonplaces of the question, town *versus* country. But, nevertheless, they underlie the whole subject of municipal government as it is now being daily discussed. If they are fully realised, it will be seen that it should be the object and the duty of municipal government to make the most of the power

which the concentration of numbers places in its hands, in order that the evil arising from this concentration of numbers may be counterbalanced—and more than counterbalanced—by the good. Well-built and well-equipped artisans' dwellings, although surrounded by bricks and mortar, are a good equivalent to insanitary labourers' cottages, even if these be the only speck on the landscape. Good light and pure water, laid on with cheapness and in plenty, will give some atonement for the lack of the free, open air of the country. The stroll of a summer evening in the municipal park may make slight amends for the loss of a ramble through the woods or over the hills, and the children can happily enjoy their game in the recreation ground quite as much as on the village green. The Municipality can place within reach of the poorest citizen such treasures of art, literature, and science, as were never dreamt of in the philosophy of his rustic father.

This conception of municipal government, which is now common to the principal towns of the country, has been slowly evolved, it is to be remembered, out of a state of affairs little better than chaos. As in Birmingham and Bradford, Glasgow or Leeds, so in a greater or lesser degree in all our other large towns, the amount of collective control and the value of public service were little more than in the smallest village at the beginning of the century. At the time of the passing of the Municipal Corporations' Act, and even for some years after, there was no definite recognition of the new order of things it made possible; and on the other hand, the strong and protracted opposition offered to the incorporation of Manchester, Birmingham, Bradford, and other towns, showed that in the minds of the most influential citizens there

was not the faintest glimmering of a truth which to their descendants has become a truism. Once incorporated, the new municipal bodies naturally turned their attention first to such elementary matters as the organisation of police, street lighting, and paving, &c. Then, stimulated greatly by the inquiry of a Royal Commission in 1844 into the health of populous towns, and assisted by consequent legislation, came the beginning of a movement for improved sanitary conditions; systems of sewage and measures for the proper removal of domestic refuse, and regulations in respect to the building of dwelling-houses. After that attention was naturally directed to the deficiencies of the supply of water, and the great advantage was discovered of municipal ownership of this first necessity of life, and of gas, and of the markets. From the provision of Baths and Parks municipal policy proceeded to Libraries and Art Galleries; and it is now the boast of the best Corporations that they care as much for the culture of the citizens as for the cleaning of the streets, that the recreation of children is for them a matter of no less importance than the organisation of police. This has been, broadly speaking, the course of municipal policy, subject to those local modifications which, in these "leading cases" I have described, and always excluding the metropolitan area, which has yet to be endowed with full municipal life.

What of the future? The future of municipal government in this country, and its relation to social progress, is bound up in two questions. The first is, Can the principles of municipal ownership and control be carried much further with beneficial results to the community generally? The second is, Must London because of its

size continue to be deprived of even such an amount of municipal socialism as has already been proved to be for the good of provincial cities? Let me deal with the second question first.

A distinguished member of Parliament, addressing a meeting in support of the "Moderate" candidates for the London County Council just before the election of 1892, said, "If experiments in Socialism were to be carried on, they ought to be made upon some theatre smaller than the metropolis." * By "experiments in Socialism" was meant the municipal ownership of water, gas, markets and tramways, advocated by the Progressive party on the London County Council. If this gentleman should honour me by reading this book, I trust he will be ready to admit that these experiments have been made "on a theatre smaller than the metropolis," and with success. I am quite aware that this ostrich-like attitude is not usually adopted by the sceptics and opponents with whom London municipal reformers have to contend. They do not usually deny that that municipal socialism which is claimed for London is to be found in working order in our principal provincial cities; many sometimes admit that in these provincial cities it has been successful. But even these with one voice proclaim that London is far too large for anything of the kind; that municipalisation of gas, water, and other monopolies may be a good thing in Glasgow, with its population of 656,000, but it would be a bad thing in London, with its population of over 4,000,000. It was with this argument that the "Moderate" or anti-municipal party in London went

* Mr R. B. Finlay, Q.C., then M.P. for Inverness, at St James's Hall, Feb. 25, 1892.

to the polls in 1892.* The business, they said, would be too great for a public body to manage well; giving employment, as it would, to such enormous numbers of people, its management would necessarily be overrun by jobbery and corruption. Is there anything in the experience of the provincial Municipalities which justifies this fear? In the size of their undertakings there are differences as great as between the Metropolis and Manchester, Liverpool, or Glasgow. The Manchester Corporation, for instance, supplies with water a population of about 1,000,000, which is five times as large as the population supplied by the Oldham Corporation. Glasgow has invested in its municipal gasworks five times the amount of capital employed in those of Dundee. Yet the good management of these monopolies in Glasgow and Manchester is certainly not inferior to that in Dundee and Oldham, and I do not think there has ever been more danger of jobbery and corruption in the former than in the latter Municipalities.

If the relative size of the municipal constituencies in Manchester or Glasgow as compared with those of London be taken into account, it must be admitted that the peril of electoral corruption is probably as great. After all, there is ample protection against such dangers in an active civic spirit, and, once it has been given full municipal powers, this is nowhere more likely to flourish than in London.

As a matter of fact, it need hardly be said, the members of provincial Municipalities do not find that the difficulty of managing these undertakings in proportion to their

* Speeches by Sir Henry James and others, *Times*, March 4, 1892.

size. And as the greater importance of the municipal work of cities like Birmingham and Manchester has attracted to the Council men of greater ability than are to be found in the Town Halls, say, of Huddersfield or Leicester, so London, it may be expected, could rely on the services of men of even higher talent. Are there not already indications, indeed, that the great municipal work of London as it is to be will share with Parliament itself the genius of statesmen?

On the other hand, because of its size, London should be able to achieve an even greater success in the municipal ownership of its monopolies than either Manchester or Birmingham, Liverpool or Glasgow. If Manchester can relieve its rates from this source to the amount of £100,000 in one year, if Birmingham can reduce the price of its gas by 33 per cent. and yet make an annual profit upon it of £40,000, if Liverpool realises on its markets more than the proceeds of a penny rate, if Glasgow can supply its citizens with the purest and cheapest water in the country and at the same time obtain an annual profit of £50,000 from its sale—what could not London gain, with a population greater than these four cities put together, from the same municipal policy. London is, it is true, at a much greater distance from lake districts and coal mines than either; but with its immensely larger number of consumers, water and light could be supplied to Londoners far more cheaply than they are to the citizens of Manchester or Birmingham, Liverpool or Glasgow. Water would probably be supplied for domestic purposes, as it is in Birmingham and Liverpool, practically at cost price, and by means of a rate; but on the supply of gas, used as it is in greatly varying

quantities by rich and by poor, for industrial and for domestic purposes, a fine revenue might be legitimately obtained, to be devoted in various ways to the promotion of the social welfare of the city. The cheapening of food, and not the making of profit, would be the main object in the municipal management of the markets; but, according to the experience of these provincial cities, London's Municipality in doing the one would also accomplish the other.

From the surplus revenues of these monopolies, indeed, London might be provided with those means of pleasure and enjoyment in which as compared with provincial cities it is still greatly deficient. In one respect—that of open spaces—London is probably already as well off as most of them, thanks to the vigorous policy of the County Council in increasing the number of its 'lungs' from 40 in 1888 to over 80 in 1894 and their acreage from about 2600 to nearly 3700. But one has only to compare Bradford, having a population of 220,000, with any area in London of similar population to discover how deficient the metropolis is in those things by which provincial municipalities have helped to make life better worth living to their poorer citizens. Baths, Libraries, Reading-Rooms, Art Gallery, Technical School, Museum—there is not a London parish that has them all as Bradford has had them for years.

In its turn, London may yet profoundly influence the future of the provincial Municipalities as their example now stirs the energies of London reformers. As I have stated, the London movement in favour of the "Betterment" tax and the rating of ground values has already obtained the support of the Municipalities of Manchester

and Bradford. The action of the London County Council in seeking Parliamentary powers not only to own the tramways but also to work them, was promptly followed by steps on the part of Glasgow and Leeds which have enabled these Municipalities to undertake the important business of urban transit, with great advantage to the public and with every prospect of financial success. Edinburgh is following the same example, and in the other large cities there is a disposition to do likewise when the expiration of the tramway companies' leases provide the Municipalities with the opportunity. There is, moreover, no more striking feature of the municipal policy of the great provincial cities at the present moment than its attitude to Labour. If the great Municipalities do not yet fully recognise their responsibilities as "model employers of labour," much has been accomplished to this end which can be clearly traced to the impetus given by the London County Council to the movement for a standard rate of wages and uniform number of hours. Mr John Morley has said, in regard to the regulation of the hours of labour and similar Socialistic proposals, that "you may safely entrust to local bodies powers which would be mischievous and dangerous in the hands of the central Government." * This view is largely held by those of us who are not Socialists in the full sense of that word; and in its practical adoption there must be a considerable extension of the functions of municipal government. In the meantime, the "lead" of the London County Council in organising its Works department is likely to be followed before long by most of the provincial Municipalities.†

* Speech at the "Eighty" Club, Nov. 19th, 1889.

† *Vide* Appendix.

It is perhaps not too much to say that the key to the future of municipal government is to be found in the urban land question. From taxation of the "unearned increment" it will probably be found no very long step to municipal ownership of the land. With such examples as the corporate estate of Liverpool and the "Common Good" of Glasgow before their eyes, it is surprising that the Municipalities should have allowed so much land to slip through their fingers; as I have shown, these two cities have great reason to be thankful to the municipal forefathers who acquired and retained even so much of the ground on which they stand. An easier method of acquiring land for public purpose has only to be demanded by concerted municipal action in order to be conceded by Parliament; and in the meantime it is interesting to note that when the Bradford Liberals formulated a programme on which to fight the last municipal elections, one of its points was that the lands which the Corporation possessed or might purchase should not be sold, but let on renewable leases.

With a just reform of the incidence of taxation and the municipalisation of the land is opened a new vista of the possibilities of municipal action in dealing with social evils. If it is further remembered that in the present generation of our provincial cities valuable assets (in the shape of the various corporate undertakings) are accruing, of which only future generations can obtain the full benefit, we can look forward with some assurance, I think, to the time when by municipal work and wealth all the worst ills of great cities can be removed.

APPENDICES.

I. THE MUNICIPALITIES AND LABOUR.

The action of Municipalities in relation to the labour they employ has of recent years been hardly less important than their work for the social welfare generally. I think it right, therefore, to append some information as to the policy of these six great Municipalities regarded from this point of view—information gained for the most part from the local Trades Councils.

Birmingham.

I have already had occasion to speak of the improvement effected by the Corporation in the lot of the gas-worker.*

In March, 1893, it was proposed in the Council "that it be an instruction to the several Committees of the Council, that, commencing with the first full week in April, the maximum hours worked by Corporation employés (to constitute a week), shall not exceed fifty-three; each week to be separate and distinct, and not based on any given average number of weeks. All time worked in excess of the above shall be considered as overtime, and shall be paid for at not less than time and a quarter. The above regulation shall only apply to

* See page 5.

employés in receipt of less than £150 per annum." To this an amendment was carried, referring the question to the General Purposes Committee, with instructions to confer upon it with the other Committees.

As the result, a report was prepared, which showed that the establishment of a fifty-three hours' working week would entail an additional annual expenditure out of the rates of £30,626, 5s. 2d., and a capital expenditure of £26,000. The Committee were of opinion that "the conditions of employment of the servants and work-people under the Corporation, having regard to their hours, duties, wages, holidays, allowances, and cost of living, will compare favourably with those of the employés of other Corporations or other employers of the same class of labour." They further reported that, owing to the varied nature of the work done, the adoption of a uniform working week of fifty-three hours, if not impracticable, would be detrimental to the public service, and would entail an unjustifiable burden upon the ratepayers. These conclusions were accepted by the Corporation.

Appended to the report of the Committee were returns giving particulars of hours, wages, and pensions. Unfortunately these particulars were not classified in any way, but it can be stated that, according to these returns, in comparatively few cases did the hours exceed sixty per week, and in many they were under fifty-three, that from three to twelve days' holiday during the year were given and paid for, and that overtime was generally paid for at the rate of time and a quarter or time and a half. There were eighty-two persons drawing pensions from the City funds entirely, to the aggregate amount of £3840, 14s. 11d. per annum. One hundred and fourteen persons were in

receipt of pensions from funds to which they had themselves contributed, amounting to £6592, 3s. 8d.

By the Birmingham Trades Council I am informed that the Corporation, "generally speaking, treat their employés fairly well." The Committees are always ready to meet any men who may have a grievance which cannot be settled by their superintendent or foreman, and it is generally settled satisfactorily. A "fair contracts" clause has been passed and is inserted in all contracts. The Corporation does all such work as paving and cleaning the streets, without the intervention of contractors.

Manchester.

The Manchester Corporation has in its service 6837 employés, receiving in salaries and wages £469,845 per annum. Of this number nearly a fourth are employed at the gasworks. A Committee has recently been engaged in preparing a scheme of "compulsory thrift," compulsory, that is, on all who enter the service of the Corporation in the future. The Council was led to take up the subject by the frequency with which attention was called to cases in which its employés died leaving wives and families destitute. In some cases they had saved nothing at all from earnings, which, whether small or large, were always regular; in other cases, their savings had been unfortunately invested. On various occasions the Corporation, ignoring the illegality of such action, had voted grants of money to the widows and orphans. There was constantly recurring, too, the difficulty which every public body is confronted with—the treatment of men too old to earn their wages, who, if discharged, would at once become a burden to the rates.

These considerations, the Corporation thought, justified it in framing a scheme for superannuation which should be compulsory on every official and every workman who might hereafter enter the municipal service. But when the scheme went before a Committee of the House of Lords "that blessed word compulsion" created difficulties. So the Corporation, taking another leaf out of the book of the London County Council, made an application to Parliament for "enabling powers for the Corporation to frame a scheme, and to use compulsion or otherwise as they might decide." As now in force, the scheme is only compulsory on all new employés receiving not less than 30s. per week, who are required to contribute to the fund not less than $3\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. of their salaries or wages, the Corporation at the same time contributing $1\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. An account is kept in favour of each contributor, who, so long as he continues in the service of the Corporation, has no power to withdraw or alienate the amount standing to his credit. But there is no forfeiture except for dishonesty. On reaching the age of 65, or on becoming incapacitated for his work, the contributor is entitled to receive the amount, plus 4 per cent. compound interest. In the event of death, it goes, of course, to his representative. So far, the scheme has been only moderately successful. It came into operation on October 1, 1892, and by the end of March 1894, 1587 employés were contributing—voluntarily contributing with the exception of a few new employés. They included heads of departments and street sweepers, foremen and labourers.

On the whole, the relations existing between the Municipality and its employés are, I am told by the Secretary

of the Manchester Trades Council, "fairly satisfactory." In March 1891, the Corporation decided to insert in all its contracts a "fair wages" clause, which has so far given general satisfaction. On the other hand, the Corporation has shown little disposition to follow in the footsteps of the London County Council in dispensing with the services of the contractor and doing its own work. If the success of the London experiment continues, however, I do not suppose, from the spirit which is dominating its policy, that the Manchester Corporation will be long in taking to heart the lesson, even though, as in the case of "Betterment," it has been given her by the metropolis.

Liverpool.

The most unfavourable report comes from Liverpool. The Council adopted a "fair wages" clause, but it applies only to annual contracts, and the definition of fair wages as "equivalent or approximate" to what is considered the standard rate is deemed unsatisfactory by the Trades Council. The Trades Council makes two other serious complaints against the Corporation. First, where, as in the building trades of the district, the recognised hours of work are 50 per week in the summer and 47½ in the winter, they are 54 in the Corporate service. As the result of this difference, Trade Unionists belonging to this industry cannot obtain employment under the Corporation. Second, the Corporation sometimes send contracts away from the city to firms elsewhere, who tender under the prices of Liverpool firms paying a fair or Trade Union rate of wages.

These complaints came before the Council at a meeting on July 4, 1894, on the receipt of a letter of protest from

the Trades Council. The Town Clerk then said that "he had never had an instance proved to him of violation of contract by the Liverpool contractors, and the letter was 'taken as read.'"

Glasgow.

Mr A. J. Hunter, the Secretary of the Glasgow United Trades Council, informs me that plumbers, joiners, masons, paviors, scavengers, "and all workers of that sort," are paid the standard rate of wages, and work the same hours as other workmen. Some years ago the gas workers, who were working twelve hours a day, felt themselves strongly organised enough to demand a reduction of hours. The Gas Committee, recognising the exceptional nature of the work, turned the 24 hours into three shifts of 8 hours each without making any reduction in wages.*

On the subject of contracts, Mr Hunter writes:—"We are in rather a peculiar position. You may not understand that in matters anent the gas, police, and statute labour, we are called the Police Commissioners, and meet every fortnight as Police Commissioners. Some time ago the Labour members in the Council (alas, we are few!) managed to get such a clause introduced. Only last week the Statute Labour Committee accepted estimates for bridge over the Clyde—such a clause is in the contract. Then the Water Commissioners, the Markets Trust, the City Improvements, Parks and Halls Committees — although identically the same body — meet fortnightly under the name of the Town Council. . . . It was pro-

* As to recent action of the Municipality in respect to tramway workers refer to page 66.

posed to this body also to adopt such a clause, and after a good deal of hard fighting it was agreed to wait till it was seen how the matter worked under the Police Commissioners."

Bradford.

In Bradford all sewerage, paving and street work generally is carried out by employés of the Corporation without the intervention of a contractor. They receive wages varying from 20s. for sweepers, to 28s. for paviors, eight hours being the working day, with the exception of carters, who (including the time spent in the stables) work $63\frac{1}{2}$ per week. Small building alterations have also been executed by the Corporation's own workmen. "In the first instance," writes an official expert on the subject, "the work may cost slightly more than if let by contract, but in the long run, in my opinion, it is much cheaper, as the work is better done and only material of a first-class quality is used. In some cases the work has actually cost less than by contract."

Leeds.

Mr O. Connellan, the Secretary of the Leeds Trades Council, writes :—

"As regards the attitude of the Corporation 'towards Labour as illustrated by its contracts and the wages and hours of its own employés' I may say that the Corporation has shown some improvement in this respect of late years, but it is not so much due to the goodwill of the Council as to the efforts of organised labour, assisted by public opinion. The employés of the Corporation gasworks are, with some few exceptions, on the eight hours' system at

a fair wage. This, however, was only secured after a strike, culminating in a riot (1890). The Corporation have for the last ten months had possession of the tramways, and during that time the hours of the whole of the tramway employés have been considerably reduced and rate of pay increased. . . . With reference to Corporation contracts, after many years of agitation, we have succeeded in getting adopted a code of regulations, copy of which I enclose. In spite of the vigilance of the trades unionists the Corporation are very lax in carrying out the regulations they have adopted, and it will be a matter of time and patience on our part, I expect, before we see them strictly enforced."

The regulations to which Mr Connellan refers were adopted in October. The two most important are as follows :—

(1) The Contractor shall pay all workmen employed by him wages, and wages for overtime respectively, at rates not less than the standard rate of wages in each branch of the trade recognised in the district where the work or any part of it may be done.

(2) The Contractor shall observe and cause to be observed by such workmen, hours of labour not greater than the hours of labour—and also the conditions of labour—usually observed in each district, *other than any condition that union men only shall be employed.*

II. COMPARATIVE STATISTICS.

TABLE A.—*The Municipalities and Health.*

	Population of Municipal Area.	Number to the Acre.	Expenditure in 1893-94 on Baths.	Acreage of Parks.	Death-Rate, 1893.
Birmingham .	478,000	39·1	£10,306	360	22·0
Manchester .	505 000	40·0	12,577	228	24·9
Liverpool . .	517,980	98·6	9,259	600	27·4
Glasgow . .	656,946	56·9	11,272	700	23·4
Bradford . .	202,975	20·3	4,254	216	20·9
Leeds . . .	367,000	17·7	...	663	22·3

* Baths are now in course of erection.

TABLE B.—*The Municipalities and Education.*

	Expenditure in 1893-94 on Technical Education.	Expenditure in 1893-94 on Libraries and Art Galleries, &c.	Number of Books in Libraries.
Birmingham . .	£7,080	£16,990	190,000
Manchester . .	17,935	24,217	250,000
Liverpool . . .	12,744	15,714	165,000
Glasgow . . .	...	9,000	108,000*
Bradford . . .	5,330	5,813	80,000
Leeds	6,245	6,882	183,000

n the Mitchell Library, which is for reference only.

TABLE C.—*Profits, in* 1893-94, *on Municipal Undertakings.*

	Gas.	Water.	Markets.	Total Net Profit.
Birmingham .	£27,966	£4,091	£3,760	£35,817
Manchester .	30,589	22,453	14,671	67,713
Liverpool .	*	4,500	12,343	16,843
Glasgow . .	29,500	42,000	3,300	74,800
Bradford . .	11,290†	503	2,185	...
Leeds . . .	470‡	7,429	12,286	19,245

In reference to this Table, it is to be remembered that in all cases profits are reckoned only after provision has been made for payment of interest on loans and *re-payment of the principal.*

* The Liverpool Gasworks are still owned by a Company.

† Net loss after payment of nearly £7,000 for public lamps, and over £28,000 for Sinking Fund, &c. Since taking over the Gasworks in 1871 the Bradford Corporation has made an aggregate net profit of £373,609.

‡ Net loss, after setting aside £10,488 for Sinking Fund. Under twenty-four years of municipal ownership a surplus of £215,227 has accrued.

TABLE D.—*Municipal Finance.*

	Rateable Value.	Amount of Debt.	Surplus of Assets.	Municipal Rates in the £
Birmingham	£2,079,517	£7,629,000	£1,721,988	2/5 to 4/-
Manchester	2,875,289	13,888,898	2,960,885	4/*
Liverpool .	3,200,000	7,237,136	7,704,803	2/11 to 3/10½
Glasgow .	4,208,842	7,924,154	2,588,072	2/9 to 3/4†
Bradford .	1,071,616	4,722,619	1,435,975	4/6
Leeds . .	1,373,292	4,976,500	1,351,881	3/7 to 4/9

* Average over whole municipal area.

† Divided between owner and occupier, and graduated according to amount of assessment.

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